the weekly Standard

AUGUST 8, 2005 $3.95

NEW YORK'S CROSSWORD WARS
MATT GAFFNEY

WHY TRUMAN DROPPED THE BOMB

Sixty years after Hiroshima, we now have the secret intercepts that shaped his decision

By Richard B. Frank

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U.S. Business Owners to Repeal the Estate Tax

June 27, 2005

To Senators Blanche Lincoln, Mark Pryor, Mary Landrieu, David Vitter, Hillary Clinton, Charles Schumer, George Voinovich, Mike DeWine, Gordon Smith and Ron Wyden:

As active and growing family businesses across the country, we strongly urge you to support permanent elimination of estate and generation-skipping taxes, now commonly referred to as the "Death Tax."

Permanent repeal of the burdensome Death Tax will help reduce the time, money, and energy expended by family business owners on estate planning and preserve companies that often are sold for tax reasons when a principal owner dies. We also are concerned about the temporary nature of the Death Tax repeal provisions. Because of the so-called "sunset provision" contained in the 2001 law, the Death Tax will be fully repealed for only one year in 2010. Unless the law is changed, the onerous Death Tax will be reinstated in 2011 with rates ranging up to the confiscatory level of 55 percent - or more than half of the family's assets. The uncertainty surrounding repeal will require family business owners across the U.S. to continue with estate-planning strategies that are costly, cumbersome and time consuming.

Moreover, the temporary provisions further complicate an already overly-complex federal tax code. If the death tax were permanently repealed, resources currently allocated to estate planning would be reinvested into improving and expanding the business, thus creating and shoring up job opportunities and providing a much-needed boost to each of our states' local economies.

Permanent repeal of the death tax is critically important to the future of our country's family businesses, farms and ranches, and, most importantly, to the people they employ. We request your support to ensure that this much-needed tax relief is permanently locked into place.

Sincerely,

Mr. Vincent Insalaco
Family Entertainment
North Little Rock, AR

Mr. Madison Murphy
Murphy Family Management
El Dorado, AR
And:
Hard Bargain Farms
Epps, LA

Ms. Melanie Meyer
Versai Inc.
New Orleans, LA

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Seven Hills, OH

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Lakefront Lines, Inc.
Cleveland, OH

Mr. Gus Payne
Arlington University
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GWOT's Up with That?

Is it conceivable that John Kerry is owed an apology by the Bush administration? All last year the Bush campaign pounded Kerry for minimizing the global war on terror (GWOT, as it's known to national security bureaucrats). "Senator Kerry has questioned whether the war on terror is really a war at all," said Vice President Dick Cheney at one point, with evident contempt. "In his view, opposing terrorism is far less of a military operation and more of a law enforcement operation."

Then last week, in a story that gave every sign of being a deliberate leak from the administration, the *New York Times* reported:

> The Bush administration is retooling its slogan for the fight against Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, pushing the idea that the long-term struggle is as much an ideological battle as a military mission, senior administration and military officials said Monday.
>
> In recent speeches and news conferences, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and the nation's senior military officer have spoken of "a global struggle against violent extremism" rather than "the global war on terror," which had been the catchphrase of choice.

From GWOT to GSAVE in just a couple weeks. So what, exactly, does the new slogan mean? Using a telltale bit of reporter's spackle, the *Times* notes that the terminological shifts "come at a time" when Bush favorite Karen Hughes assumes her new job as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy—that is, the two things are related in some way the reporter can't be bothered to spell out.

Hughes, as it happens, had her confirmation hearings last week. She told senators that her message to the world would be: "I want to learn more about you and your lives, what you fear, what you dream, what you believe, what you value most." This is what happens when you put a talented public relations professional into a foreign policy job—they redefine the problems of the world as public relations problems.

But Hughes is hardly alone in thus cavalierly undermining the seriousness of George W. Bush's defining mission. Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said he "objected to the use of the term 'war on terrorism' before, because . . . if you call it a war, then you think of people in uniform as being the solution." The solution, he said, will be "more diplomatic, more economic, more political than it is military"—i.e., not part of my job description.

National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley was similarly "on message": "It is more than just a military war on terror," he said. "It's broader than that. It's a global struggle against extremism. We need to dispute both the gloomy vision and offer a positive alternative." (Since when is winning a war a gloomy vision?)

It sounds for all the world as if the Bush administration wants to fight a more effective, more thoughtful, more strategic, more proactive, and—dare we say it?—more sensitive war on terror. And if you think you've heard that language before, you're right. It came from John Kerry last fall. Kerry described the war on terror as "occasionally military" but argued that it is "primarily an intelligence and law enforcement operation." Richard Holbrooke, Kerry's senior foreign policy adviser, said: "We're not in a war on terror, in the literal sense. The war on terror is like saying 'the war on poverty.' It's just a metaphor."

Bush, if you recall, was aghast: "Anyone who thinks we are fighting a metaphor does not understand the enemy we face, and has no idea how to win the war and keep America secure." But that was then.

THE SCRAPBOOK, just to be clear, understands that winning the GWOT will involve more than the application of brute military force. And we're all in favor of learning about what others dream and what they value most. But what we have learned to our horror in recent years is that far too many people dream mostly of murdering us.

Indeed the disturbing thing about this fascination with rebranding the war on terror is that it, if we may say, came at a time when a resurgent Taliban is stepping up its activities in Afghanistan, al Qaeda bombers are running amok in London, and tourist hotels are being blown up in Egypt. This is self-evidently *not* a great time to shift from a "Global War on Terror" to a "Long Struggle to Portray Americans as Good People Who Don't Hate Muslims and Respect Religions All Over the World Even as We Try to Dismantle the Networks of Ideological Extremists Who at the Very Least Disagree With Us and May Want to Do Us Harm." Or whatever. ♦

Ricky's World

For years, anti-defamation groups have labored to convince mouth-breathing American rustics that Islam is a religion of peace, as opposed to a religion of blowing up infidels. No doubt, it's been an uphill battle. Unfair stereotypes have grown so prevalent that a young jihadist can barely board a subway these days without commuters casting accusatory glances at his ticking backpack.

But now, there is ululation from Dearborn to Damascus as a much-

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needed ally has arrived to assist in the image overhaul. Yes, we refer to Puerto Rican singing sensation Ricky Martin—he of the dangerously tight pants and *Livin' La Vida Loca* fame.

Martin is striving to effect global change, building on the foundation of his artistic contributions first as a member of boy-band Menudo, and later with socially conscious lyrics such as "I wanna be your lover, your only Latin lover / We'll go around the world in a day / Don't say no, no / Shake it my way, oh shake your bon-bon / Shake your bon-bon / shake your bon-bon."

Attending the silver jubilee of the Arab Children's Congress in Jordan, Martin told the assembled Arab youth, "I promise I will become a spokesperson, if you allow me to, a spokesperson on your behalf. I will defend you and try to get rid of any stereotypes."

Of course, when becoming a spokesperson for an entire people, it's never a bad idea to understand their language, which Martin doesn't. So he had to learn the hard way that some stereotypes are well-deserved. When he posed for photos at the conference, which is intended to promote peace and cross-cultural understanding, a fan draped a kaffiyeh around him with the Arabic inscription "Jerusalem is Ours."

Good try, Ricky.

Plus which, the Arab Children's Congress doubtless deserves a better celebrity spokesperson than one who once had a runaway smash single called "She Bangs": "Talk to me, tell me your name / You blow me off like it's all the same / You lit a fuse, and now I'm ticking away / Like a bomb . . . yeah baby." ♦

The English Patient's Day in Court

Two months ago in these pages ("The English Patient," May 30), Wesley J. Smith wrote about the plight of Leslie Burke, a 45-year-old Englishman with a progressive neurological disorder who was suing Britain's National Health Service, lest they euthanize him by refusing to provide a feeding tube when he is no longer able to swallow.

Though Burke technically lost his appeal last week, he still won what his lawyer correctly characterized as "a significant practical victory for Mr. Burke and others in his situation." While Burke can't be guaranteed he'll continue to receive artificial nutrition and hydration should he lapse into a persistent vegetative state, neither will a doctor be able to hasten his death against Burke's wishes based upon some "futilitarian" calculation that a severely disabled life is not worth living.

The Burke decision is not ideal, but it does seem to have drawn an important ethical line in the sand. In this increasingly utilitarian age, that's no small achievement. ♦

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Casual

In Pivo Veritas

In Prague recently for a journalism course, I made a point of conversing with locals over many pints of *pivo* (Czech for beer) so as to expand my knowledge of the ancient capital of a young democracy. As luck would have it, the program that sent me to Franz Kafka's hometown also proffered an introduction to a fellow named Oldrich Cerny, once a film dubber, then for much of the 1990s director of Czech foreign intelligence. Drinking with "Olda," a self-deprecating man who punctuates his talk with chuckles, I learned that he is a buddy of Václav Havel and knows the Dalai Lama. So, stein in hand, I was primed to gain insights into the Velvet Revolution and all it has wrought.

But instead of discussing Cerny's work as reformer of an intelligence structure formerly rife with Soviet agents or his present duties as director of the Prague Security Studies Institute, we did what Cerny said Czechs do in pubs: complain about sports, women, and politics.

"The Czechs are complaining and whining all the time," Cerny told me, sipping not *pivo* but Moravian red wine. "They never had it better. Salaries are getting higher and higher every month. Still the Czechs are whining and complaining!"

An English ex-pat drinking with us chimed in to diagnose why Czechs are wont to grouse.

"Our biggest problem is that people are still discovering that democracy is not perfect. They are ridiculous, asking, 'Why not?'" His answer: "Well, 'cause that's life!"

For my part, I found it hard to fathom how anyone could dwell on grievance in such a vibrant city, with its red-tiled roofs rising over cobblestone streets, its deliciously crisp golden pilsner, and its abundance of beautiful women we dubbed "Czechlinas." And to think all this languished under communism just over 15 years ago. I asked if the beer halls used to be full back when Cerny's not-so-esteemed predecessors in the intelligence business haunted the already-eerie medieval streets.

Darren Gygi

"I can assure you," Cerny said merrily, "that I spent far more time in the pubs before 1989 than after 1989. That was the place where you made the deals."

The enterprising Czechs initiated a barter system over steins of *pivo* and glasses of Becherovka, a robust cinnamon-flavored herbal liqueur, rather than queue endlessly for toilet paper and cheese. In the words of the English chap, "It was a parallel economy lubricated by beer."

But perhaps their most valuable time was spent away from the bars. According to Cerny, in the years before the 1989 student-inspired overthrow of the Communist regime, patrons would sneak out of the pubs at ten to nine every evening to listen to the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, hungry to learn the names of those no longer afraid to say "no" to communism. One evening, Radio Free Europe told listeners that police had killed a student, Martin Smid, during the previous day's demonstration. Though this report was incorrect, Smid's "martyrdom" inspired many to overcome their fear and join the demonstrations.

"We thought, 'If these people have stopped being afraid, then what are we doing here, still scared to death? You know, there's no need," Cerny said.

Although Cerny spends less time in watering holes than before the revolution, he still has his favorite hangouts.

When the summer tourists descend upon Prague, he goes with his son to a dive in one of the outer districts.

"It's a typical ugly village pub, but good beer, good service," he said.

And in old-town Prague, he likes U Dvou Kocek, or "The Two Cats," where a few nights before—over a beer with the same name as, but a much better taste than, a certain American brand (let's call it Budweiser)—I'd heard an octogenarian play on his accordion a tune I recognized as "Auld Lang Syne," but which the Czechs know as a lugubrious dirge about boys gone to war never to return.

One night in the 1960s, Cerny told us, his father walked out of The Two Cats and was grabbed by a couple of men in trench coats, who shoved him into a car that sped away into the labyrinth of twisted streets.

"We never saw him again," Cerny said. Yet he says he thinks fondly of the place—as the site of his father's last enjoyable, *pivo*-complemented meal.

"When I see Two Cats, I always remember my father walking out feeling great, after great lunch." Olda chuckled. "And then these two men in trench coats . . . "

I remembered how wonderful I'd felt, nights before, walking out of The Two Cats—where they say Mozart once drank—sated with culture and malty *pivo*. Listening to Olda I could almost imagine living and dying in Prague.

Joseph Lindsley

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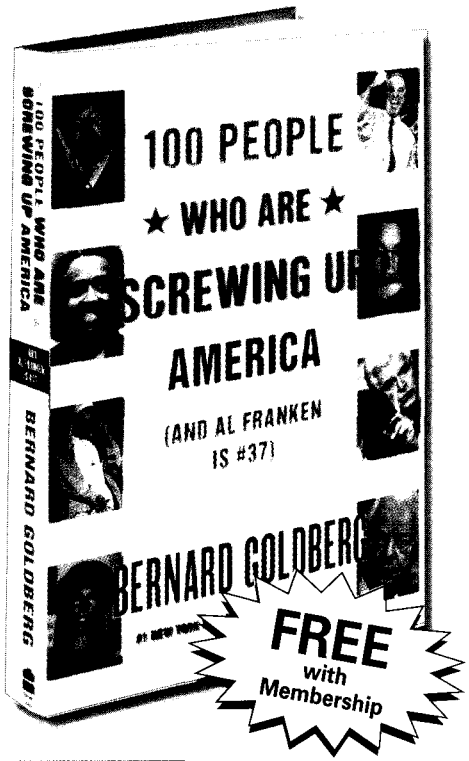
100 liberal know-it-alls who pose a threat to America

Our big problem in America, says Bernard Goldberg, is that we have become too tolerant: over the years, we've grown wonderfully broad-minded and accepting of things we should detest—like foul language in public—and close-minded about things we should revere—like standards of public decency that everyone used to accept. In *100 People Who Are Screwing Up America (and Al Franken Is #37)* Goldberg (author of the #1 *NY Times* bestseller *Bias*) fearlessly and hilariously identifies the people, famous and not-so-famous, who he believes are most responsible for our society's decline.

- Hollywood blowhards who think they're smart just because they're famous—and compare Bush to Hitler while thinking that bloody dictators like Fidel Castro are cool
- Culture elite hypocrites—like the Beverly Hills environmentalist-to-the-stars who screams at total strangers for driving SUV's but doesn't think twice about tooling around the country in a private jet
- TV "journalists" who are so cynical and jaded that they have no idea how damaging their shameless bias, political posturing and cheap exploitation are to our country
- Learned pundits who fight back tears over so-called American atrocities in Iraq and yet never seem to cry over the genuine atrocities that are commonplace in the Islamic world



The number one *New York Times* bestselling author of *Bias* delivers another bombshell—this time aimed at... *100 People Who Are Screwing Up America.*

- The congresswoman who thinks hurricane names are too lily white and thinks we need more hurricanes with "black names"
- America Bashers who told us, just days after 9/11, that the American flag stands for intimidation, censorship, violence, bigotry, sexism, and homophobia—that is, when it isn't standing for jingoism, vengeance and war
- The intellectual thugs at some of our best universities who make rules about what you can and cannot say at school
- The well-dressed corporate crooks who cook the books and steal the futures of their own employees—because ten or twenty million a year isn't enough
- Liberal pols and pundits who just keep getting angrier and think they're not only smarter, but better than everyone else

Goldberg is no down-the-line conservative, and you are certain to disagree with some of his choices and rankings—and probably also with his often salty language. Nevertheless, *100 People Who Are Screwing Up America (and Al Franken is #37)* is a rollicking and revealing look at 100 of the most egregious obstacles on the path of our nation's return to glory.

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INSTANT SAVINGS! Join today and get *100 People Who Are Screwing Up America (and Al Franken Is #37)* absolutely FREE, plus shipping and handling. Then take up to one year to buy two more books at regular low Club prices (20-50% below retail). After you have paid for your books, your Membership can be ended by you or the Club. Plus you will also get the opportunities to buy from our list of Superbargain books that the Club regularly offers. These books are offered at 70-90% discounts!! (Sorry, Superbargain books don't count toward your book commitment).

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Mommy Markets

Meghan Cox Gurdon has missed an opportunity to preach what she practices in her review of Wendy Sachs's *How She Really Does It* ("Professional Mothers," July 18).

In addition to deflating some of the myths of the feminist movement, Gurdon might consider that many women are currently in the work force because they have no choice. Staying at home might mean losing your house.

The experiences of news anchors and actresses are novel. It is easy to criticize the choices of women who have the income to walk away from their jobs, but it is specious to compare their career ambitions to those who have no such luxury.

Further, the idea that women should instead have children in their 20s and enter the work force later would require the same kind of social shift that pushed women into the work force. It presupposes marriage in one's early 20s, implying an instant return to traditional sexual mores.

People pursue their education in their youth and build credentials in their 20s and 30s. To begin later is not necessarily easier, and likely means your peers have left you in the dust.

Instead of laying guilt on the mother whose child bawls his eyes out at day care, Gurdon, as a writer—a working mother—who is able to stay home, might offer some entrepreneurial suggestions.

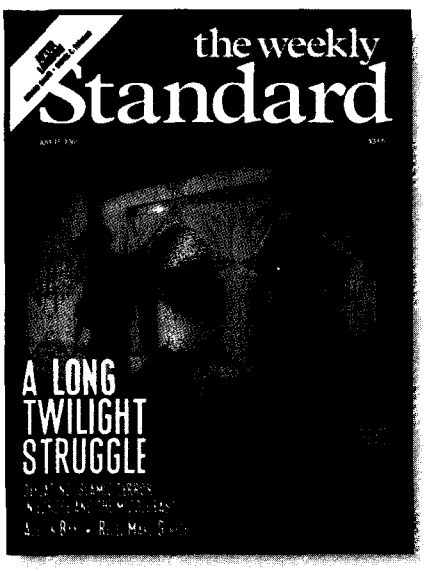
Markets ultimately reflect demands. As markets came to value women as much as they valued men, they can come to value parents, but only if we demand it.

We might demand improved flextime arrangements for both parents with the aid of technology: home office, contract, and project work. Such solutions acknowledge our present economy while allowing mothers and fathers to be successful as both professionals and, more important, as parents.

Eileen Norcross
Arlington, VA

Go Mudcat

I'm pleased that Dave "Mudcat" Saunders, portrayed in Matt Labash's "Hunting Bubba" (June 20), is a Democrat. He brags about cheating to pass his real estate exam, is a "former" drinker with moonshine in the cooler, claims to have a 200-word vocabulary, and can't finish a sentence without profanity. Clearly all that makes Mudcat superior to the Dems' recent presidential candidates. As a recovered Democrat myself, I encourage the party leaders to do exactly as he says.



Kevin Kennedy
Puyallup, WA

Foreign Brains

Robert Satloff is correct: There were more international students in U.S. universities in the last academic year for which data are available, 2003–04, than there were the year before 9/11 ("The Brain Drain That Wasn't," July 25). But it isn't fair to hold those of us who worry about international student enrollment trends accountable for newspapers' sometimes overblown headlines about dramatic declines (although there have been dramatic declines at some schools and from some countries).

Here are the facts, so readers can judge for themselves: After increases every year since 1972, international student enrollments at U.S. universities leveled off during the 2002–03 academic year and declined during 2003–04. Preliminary data suggest a further decline in 2004–05, which followed the imposition of new visa procedures in 2002. When it becomes exponentially harder to get into this country, and then fewer people come, one is justified in supposing that the former had something to do with the latter.

Is the downward trend ephemeral or long-term? No one knows. But no enterprise that waits to take corrective action until it has definitively lost its market will long be in business. Advocates of educational exchange are not alone in sounding the alarm. Secretaries of State Powell and Rice, among many other national leaders, have frequently expressed concern and have promised corrective measures to ensure that the United States does not lose its edge in attracting the precious resource of international students.

Suggesting that concern over international student enrollment is nothing but exaggerated rhetoric is both wrong and a disservice to an important national asset.

Marlene M. Johnson
Executive Director & CEO
Association of International Educators
Washington, DC

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Frist's Stem Cell Capitulation

With his Friday speech on the Senate floor announcing his support for federal funding of new embryonic stem cell research, Senate majority leader Bill Frist did the wrong thing at the wrong time.

For four years, embryo research advocates have claimed that the Bush administration has "banned stem cell research." Not so. The issue in question is *federal funding* for embryonic stem cell research—research in which new embryos will be destroyed. Such research has been, and is, legal, and while the president has endorsed a ban on human cloning, he has not proposed to outlaw the destruction of embryos created through in vitro fertilization (IVF). He simply does not want the federal government to fund or promote research that requires the ongoing destruction of embryos.

In fact, for all the complaints of scientists that the American government is standing in the way of their pioneering efforts, the striking fact about the present situation is that there are virtually no legal prohibitions on many radical areas of biotechnology. There are no limits on human cloning, no limits on fetal farming, no limits on the creation of man-animal hybrids, and no limits on the creation of human embryos solely for research and destruction. It is in this rather permissive moral and legal climate that Frist seeks to remove one of the few public boundaries that still exist.

In May, the House of Representatives passed a bill, sponsored by Representatives Michael Castle and Diana DeGette, that would authorize federal funding for research using stem cells derived from IVF embryos left over in fertility clinics, unwanted by the parents who produced them, and destroyed by researchers. This means the federal government would promote what many citizens see as a grave evil: the deliberate destruction of nascent human life. The legislation, which President Bush has promised to veto, would make embryo destruction a nationally sponsored project. It is a most immoderate approach to a morally weighty issue.

It is immoderate partly because it is so unnecessary. When it comes to stem cell research, there are many sources of support, some of them from other levels of government. In 2004 (to our regret), California passed a law providing $3 billion in funding for embryo research and research cloning—far more money than even the most pro-stem cell administration would ever provide through the NIH. Meanwhile, embryo destruction proceeds apace in private laboratories around the country, and in some states beyond California with generous public funding.

So why does it make sense to force citizens to become complicit in an activity they see as wrong, when funding for such research is readily available from nonfederal sources? Why not support the current national policy, which neither funds nor bans embryo research? And why call for funding research on the so-called "spare embryos" without first demanding limits on other, even more egregious projects—such as creating and destroying embryos solely for research?

In his speech endorsing Castle-DeGette, Frist did also call for banning the creation of embryos solely for research and for banning human cloning. This makes him more responsible than most embryo research advocates. But he did not make his support for funding research using the "spares" contingent on setting such limits. So the effect of Frist's remarks was to strengthen the hand of those no-limits senators who wish to advance the very kinds of research that Frist still says he believes should be out of bounds (at least for now).

The incoherence of Frist's position is staggering. In his Senate speech, he explained that the "embryo is a human life at its earliest stage of development." He said that he believes, as a person of faith and a man of science, that "human life begins at conception." He reminded us that "we were all once embryos." He called on all citizens, including scientists, to treat human embryos with the "utmost dignity and respect." It was a clear and elegant statement on the dignity of early human life, backed up by a doctor's understanding of elementary embryology.

But then, as if giving a different speech, Frist called on the federal government to promote, with taxpayer dollars, the ongoing destruction of human embryos. In a television interview that day, he said that research using and destroying the "spares" can be done ethically so long as there is a

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"moral framework around informed consent." But if embryos deserve respect as nascent human lives, as Frist says he believes, it should not matter whether researchers have permission from their parents to destroy them. If embryos are "human life at its earliest stage," as Frist says he believes, then none of us possesses the authority to consent to their destruction. To promote embryo destruction and still claim to be "pro-life," as Frist did throughout his speech, is absurd.

Frist justified his position on using the "spares" by pointing to the unique scientific promise of embryonic stem cell research. He said that our policies must evolve with the times, and that "the limitations put in place in 2001 will, over time, slow our ability to bring potential new treatments for certain diseases." But by this logic, the more advanced research that will surely exist in the near future—like the mass creation of genetically tailored embryonic stem cells, produced by creating and destroying cloned human embryos—will justify shifting the moral and political boundaries yet again. It undermines the effort to ban human cloning, as Sen. Frist says he wants to do. And it may justify funding human cloning, as Sen. Frist may one day be convinced to do by his own reasoning. If the respect due to embryos is so little that the government should promote their destruction with NIH dollars, why not fund human cloning for research purposes, too? If the standards of human dignity evolve with the latest research possibilities, why not harvest human fetuses in animal wombs, if doing so is more likely to advance science and cure disease?

This moving of the boundaries is exactly what the pro-embryo research side wants to do. Those who defend research cloning, for example, claim that we need to do it in order to produce genetically controlled stem cells. They say that this will allow us to build disease-specific models and to transplant cells without fear of immune-rejection. The scientific argument for research cloning is thus also an argument against the clinical value of using the "spares," which are far less useful because we cannot control the genomes of the stem cells derived from them. But these advocates know that funding the cloning of human embryos for research purposes is not today's fight, but tomorrow's fight. And so they need to set a precedent that public support for embryo, fetal, and cloning research depends not on the moral character of the research itself but on its projected scientific value in light of the latest laboratory findings or speculations. Senator Frist, with his speech, gave in to this kind of situational ethics, and became an ally of those who seek to do what the senator says he wants to stop.

Edmund Burke once said that "the sides of sickbeds are not the academies for forming statesmen and legislators." There is growing reason to believe that Burke was right. But here is one thing that can be done between now and when the Senate takes up this issue, most likely in September: Those pro-embryo research politicians who rushed to praise Frist's wisdom and courage should now be forced to take a position on the rest of Frist's recommendations: Will they agree to ban the creation of any human embryo solely for research? Will they agree to make federal funding of research involving destroyed IVF-embryos contingent on such a ban? Or is their support for funding the "spares" really just one step toward funding everything—creation for destruction, research cloning, fetal farming—and a way to weaken those, like President Bush, who oppose the steady march toward the brave new world?

And Frist could still make his support for the Castle-DeGette bill depend on winning the support of his pro-embryo research colleagues for a ban on the creation of human embryos solely for research and destruction. This, at least, would make supporting limited research on the "spares" contingent on stopping the full-scale instrumentalization of nascent human life. Such a "Frist Compromise" would not, on balance, make us a better country. It would not settle this divisive moral issue. For our part, we would still oppose any federal funding of embryo-destructive research. But at least such a "Frist Compromise" would represent an effort to hold the nation to some moral standard, instead of simply capitulating to those who seek a national blessing for embryo destruction.

—Eric Cohen and William Kristol

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John Roberts's Other Papers

Portrait of the judge as an undergraduate.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

JOHN ROBERTS was born in Buffalo, New York, and raised in Long Beach, Indiana, but he spent much of his young adulthood—about six years—in Cambridge, Massachusetts, first as an undergraduate at Harvard College, then as a student at Harvard Law. Roberts matriculated at Harvard in the fall of 1973, graduated *summa cum laude* three years later, entered Harvard Law that fall, graduated *magna cum laude* in 1979—and was promptly hospitalized for exhaustion.

Ever since July 19, when President Bush nominated Roberts to replace retiring associate Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O'Connor, accounts of the nominee's Harvard days have found their way into newspaper profiles and magazine sidebars. The anecdotes tend to be isolated, the events only dimly recalled, but taken together they suggest a driven young man, eager to achieve, and possessed of an intellect that would allow him to achieve. The only question was . . . achieve what?

When Roberts arrived on campus, he was drawn to the study of history. One of his roommates told the Harvard *Crimson* the other day that "John loved history, and said he'd be a history professor." One of his advisers, William LaPiana, now a professor at New York Law School, told the *Crimson* that Roberts was a "hard-working and happy undergraduate who loved studying history." Early on, then, a life in academia was a possibility.

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Roberts certainly had the habits of an academic. He studied constantly. He liked to quote Samuel Johnson, the English lexicographer and raconteur, to those around him. He and his friends' idea of collegiate athletics was Nerf basketball played in dorm rooms. According to a roommate, he "always had a bottle or two on hand"—a bottle or two of Pepto Bismol. "There were no parties."

Roberts was a nerd, in other words. But he was an extremely accomplished nerd. Roberts entered Harvard with sophomore standing; his first year, he won the William Scott Ferguson award—given annually to the sophomore history major who writes an "outstanding essay" as part of a class assignment. To win a second-year award in your first year is no small thing. Roberts's essay was entitled "Marxism and Bolshevism: Theory and Practice." Unfortunately, no public copy of it seems to exist. Maybe Sen. Schumer will subpoena it from the nominee's private papers.

Two of Roberts's college history papers survive, however, in the Harvard University Archives. For a few bucks the archivists will send you copies of "The Utopian Conservative: A Study of Continuity and Change in the Thought of Daniel Webster" and "Old and New Liberalism: The British Liberal Party's Approach to the Social Problem, 1906-1914." Roberts wrote both papers in his senior year, and while it's safe to say they are bereft of any clues to how Roberts would rule as a Supreme Court justice, they make for lively reading and shed some light on his interests and his character as a young man.

Roberts's essay on Daniel Webster, "The Utopian Conservative," is 29 pages long. There are 31 footnotes. It won the 1976 Bowdoin Prize for Undergraduates, for excellence in English composition, and like all such prizewinners, it's written for the general reader.

It deserved to win. In a few short pages Roberts outlines the contours of Webster's thought, finding it "essentially consistent," and based "on the solid bed-rock of a world view which remained constant despite the vicissitudes of politics." Roberts is drawn to Webster's constancy, his ability to engage in politics while behaving as if he were above politics. And Roberts is drawn to Webster's pragmatism. The Massachusetts senator's "entire public life," writes Roberts, "in one way or another, was to be a variation on this one theme: the rights of property." Webster, attempting desperately to hold the Union together, spent much of his life arguing that the nation's diverse economic interests could act as a glue, binding one region to another.

Webster failed, of course. Ideas and politics overwhelmed economics. But why did Webster fail? Roberts concludes that he was a man out of step with his age. "Webster needed an idealistic society to support his realistic nationalism," writes Roberts, "a society in which class and sectional conflict did not exist. The America of the 1850s was no such society; neither"—and here Roberts gives us a brief and rare glimpse into his personal beliefs—"is the America of the 1970s."

Reading "The Utopian Conservative," one is struck again and again by the lucidity of young Roberts's prose, the ease with which he writes, and the style that emerges from his plain language. "Only a national bank could insure uniformity and fluidity of currency," he writes, "a common concern of the California pioneer, the Kentucky drover, the Alabama planter, and the New York

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laborer." Later in the essay, noting a change in Webster's thought, Roberts writes, "Silken cords of affection had replaced iron bonds of interest." These are lovely constructions—sentences you'd expect to find in a Jacques Barzun essay, not in a Harvard undergraduate paper.

On March 25, 1976, about the time he was finishing "The Utopian Conservative," Roberts submitted his paper on the British Liberal party as his senior honors thesis. This essay is considerably longer—a dense 166 pages, plus 9 pages of endnotes and bibliographical material—and includes cartoon illustrations from *Punch*. There are a few hundred footnotes. To support his argument, Roberts draws from songs, pamphlets, speeches, and letters of the era. It's clear, too, that he's immersed himself in the secondary literature. An early reference is to the historian Gertrude Himmelfarb's *Victorian Minds*.

"Established institutions are periodically assailed by new social forces which test their ability to survive," Roberts begins. The British Liberal party, he argues, was no different. It had to cope with the rise of the masses in general and the rise of labor unions in particular—what politicians and critics of the Edwardian era referred to as "the social problem." The Liberal party formed its last government in 1906, and held power until 1915, then declined precipitously. Roberts's central question: "Did the Liberal Party decline because it refused to adapt to the modern polity, with its large proportion of working-class electors, or must the cause of decline be sought elsewhere?"

Roberts's argument is a complex one, difficult to distill here, but suffice it to say that the Liberal party's problem was that it won working-class votes when it adopted a reform program, and not when it didn't. Like any good historian, Roberts acknowledges throughout the limitations of his argument, and he is reluctant to draw conclusions, even though "it is not easy for a student to leave a problem unsolved."

More important, for our purposes, is Roberts's technique. He explains: "Rather than measuring the final product against some pre-determined standard and finding it either acceptable or wanting, I hope to examine the matrix from which reform emerged." And, more important still, at times Roberts's thesis reads like a legal brief: He always clearly states exactly what will be accomplished in each chapter, and in each section of each chapter, and sometimes in each paragraph of each section of each chapter. By the end of the thesis it is clear that Roberts has given up history for the law.

Two things stand out in these old term papers. One is Roberts's sense of humor. "The Websterian leader should be non-partisan," Roberts writes in "The Utopian Conservative": "above demagoguery, concerned for the public good, and, above all, the Websterian leader should be . . . Webster." And here's Roberts on David Lloyd George, the last Liberal prime minister: "Passion, intellect, and determination, or, if you prefer—as many did then and now—zealotry, deviousness, and obduracy, were the characteristics which propelled Lloyd George." Clever lines, both—well worth a chuckle, and evidence, one likes to think, of Roberts's reported love of P.G. Wodehouse.

Roberts's thesis reads like a legal brief: He always clearly states exactly what will be accomplished in each chapter, and in each section of each chapter.

The other striking thing is the emphasis Roberts places on the individual. His histories include room for social, cultural, and demographic phenomena, but also clear out a space for individual action. Roberts concludes his thesis by pointing out that "the individual initiative of the [Liberal] Party's most dynamic leaders" helped to counteract forces in the party that "inhibited an energetic confrontation of the social problem." Lloyd George and Winston Churchill were "doctors" helping the Liberal party to survive. They were "the gods of Liberal reform." As they went, so did their party.

This runs against the current of most contemporary academic historians, who view history either as driven by abstract and mechanical economic structures, or as the constant conspiring of the powerful against the powerless. But neither does Roberts embrace the "Great Man Theory of History" or any other overarching approach. Instead he appropriately acknowledges the impact men like Daniel Webster, David Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill had on the politics and everyday life of their times.

Roberts also seems to be drawn to noble causes—Webster's attempt to save the Union, Lloyd George and Churchill's program of incremental reform—that end in failure. The Union busted; there was civil war. The Liberal party collapsed; the British welfare state metastasized. A deep respect for courageous intentions and righteous politics courses through Roberts's college papers. He grows most eloquent when he describes

> a man of character, a disinterested, self-sacrificing man of wisdom who continually worked with others of his sort to resolve any controversy which threatened national harmony. The man of character did not fight in the thick of political battles, but rather raised himself above the conflict and stilled it through dispassionate compromise.

Doubtless Roberts saw such qualities in the men he wrote about while at Harvard—and perhaps he aspired to cultivate them in himself. ♦

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Bush Hadta Have CAFTA

The lame duck wins again.

BY FRED BARNES

UPI Newspictures / Roger R. Wollenberg

Bush stumps for CAFTA.

PRESIDENT BUSH went to bed at the normal time, roughly 10 P.M., on the night the House of Representatives voted on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. But he was awakened by White House staffers to talk to wavering Republicans on the House floor. A cell phone with the president on the line was passed by Bush's chief congressional lobbyist, Candida Wolff, from congressman to congressman. Then Bush watched the vote count on C-SPAN before giving up. The total for CAFTA looked to be stuck at 214, not enough for passage. He went back to bed, only to be called a few moments later by Karl Rove, his political adviser and deputy chief of staff. Three Republicans—Robin Hays of North Carolina, Steve LaTourette of Ohio, Mike Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania—had simultaneously voted for the treaty and it had won. Relieved, Bush went back to bed again. It was after midnight.

Bush worked harder for CAFTA—and stayed up later—than he had for the vote in 2003 on his Medicare prescription drug benefit. The White House, indeed Bush's entire administration, was mobilized for this vote. For days, Bush met with House members individually and in small groups. He traveled to Capitol Hill to address the House Republican conference on the morning of the vote, speaking passionately for nearly 45 minutes with no notes, then answering a dozen questions. Rove was deeply involved, too, making calls and office visits and having lunch with one House member whose vote was critical.

Why the extraordinary effort? It wasn't because the treaty with Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic was so important to the American economy. Exports from the United States to the six countries total about $15 billion a year. That's roughly the buying power of the greater Sacramento metropolitan area. True, the treaty does integrate the six economies more tightly with our own. And it has symbolic value: the big guy to the north embracing his little brothers to the south.

But more important to Bush than its economics or symbolism is CAFTA's national security value. Fidel Castro and his acolyte, President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, are desperately trying to undermine the democratically elected and mostly pro-American governments of Central America. They would like to see the Marxist Sandinistas regain power in Nicaragua, for instance, and Chávez is pumping money from his country's oil wealth into that project, among others. (He also provides cut-rate oil wealth to Castro's Cuba.) Both Bush and the democratic leaders in Central America believe CAFTA will bolster their economies and strengthen them against leftist radicals of the Castro/Chávez ilk. Thus, in his address to House Republicans, the president devoted much of his speech to this issue.

A second reason for Bush's enthusiasm for CAFTA is his trade agenda. Presidents have usually gotten their way when they've pushed for more open trade, but after a half century, the free trade consensus on Capitol Hill has collapsed. Meanwhile, countries all over the world—in the Middle East especially—are clamoring to negotiate free trade treaties with the United States. If CAFTA had failed, Bush's entire trade agenda would have been off the table for the remainder of his second term. Instead, it lives. Why does that matter? To qualify for a trade agreement with the United States, countries must adopt the practices of democratic capitalism, which means a treaty might achieve what it took a war to accomplish in Iraq. In the past, trade treaties sailed through the Senate, but CAFTA was ratified only 54-45—and that masks how difficult it was for Republicans to put together a mere

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majority. The House has traditionally looked even less favorably on free trade.

There's a third reason CAFTA was so important to Bush. It's exactly what you'd think: politics. After seeing the prospects for enacting Social Security reform fade, Bush needed a victory. Or at least he had to stave off a Democratic win. For the first time in the post-World War II era, the leaders of a party made it their policy to defeat a free trade agreement. Democrats offered a series of unconvincing explanations for their opposition, but their transparent motive was to deal a serious blow to Bush. Had they succeeded, House minority leader Nancy Pelosi would be gloating on national TV about the demise of the Bush presidency. And it would be true. Instead, Bush is revived and ready to take another shot at overhauling Social Security, plus take up tax reform.

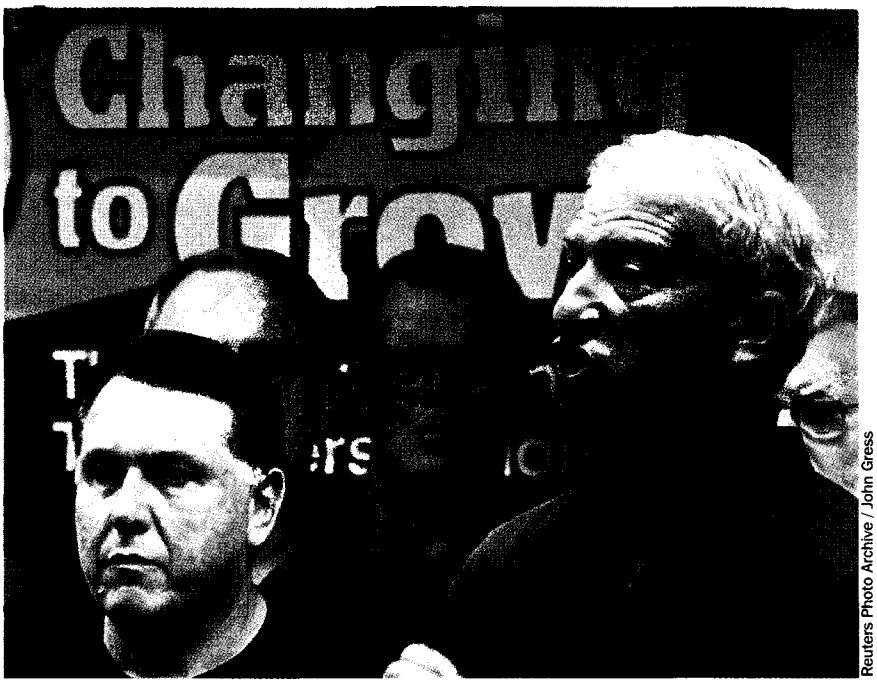
Two Republican leaders played significant roles in passing CAFTA. Bill Thomas, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, is an ardent free trader and a genius at drafting legislation that only he understands fully. Thomas is also pragmatic. He allowed a vote on a bill requiring the monitoring of China's trade practices to come before CAFTA. It passed, dissipating some of the anxiety over China. The other Republican who mattered was whip Roy Blunt. He promised all year that he could produce enough votes to ratify CAFTA, and he finally persuaded the White House. Better yet, he delivered.

For all the media chatter about Bush as a diminished force in Washington, he and congressional Republicans have put together a string of impressive victories with more to come. With John Roberts as his nominee, the president is on his way to transforming the Supreme Court into the conservative body that Republicans have dreamed about for decades. Meanwhile, the economy is so robust that Democrats rarely mention it. Is Bush a lame duck? He sure is. He may be the most energized and successful lame duck in the history of the modern presidency. ♦

Divorce, Union Style

Organized labor is still an oxymoron.

BY PHILIP TERZIAN



Reuters Photo Archive / John Gress

Teamsters president James Hoffa and SEIU's Andrew Stern

ON THE FACE OF IT, the implosion of the AFL-CIO at its annual convention—its two largest member-unions have just quit, and others threaten to follow—is no big deal. When it was formed, in 1955, by the merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (which had rancorously split 20 years earlier), more than a third of American workers were union members. Twenty years later, that figure was down to one in five, and today it is less than 13 percent.

In terms of political influence, those numbers can be deceptive. A little more than a quarter of American voters live in a household where someone belongs to a union, up from 19 percent a dozen years ago, and those dues-paying members have furnished the Democratic party with hundreds of millions of dollars in recent decades. But the numbers can be deceptive in other ways as well. Since the 1960s, union growth has been largely confined to public employees, who now comprise nearly half the population of the AFL-CIO. Take those figures away, and a mere 8 percent of workers in the private sector—less than one in ten—belong to a union.

How this happened, and what it tells us about the changing patterns of employment in the American economy, is a subject unto itself. But the fact that the diminishing ranks of

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American labor are now divided among themselves is part of the story. The truth is that organized labor is a spent force in American life, and its leadership cannot agree about what it should do, or what needs to be done.

To be sure, there is an instructive irony in all this. The current leader of the AFL-CIO, 71-year-old John Sweeney, came to power a decade ago when he led a rebellion against the federation's longtime president, Lane Kirkland. At the time, the complaint against Kirkland was that he had grown complacent in office—the federation is comfortably headquartered in a giant building two blocks from the White House—and the insurgents proclaimed that the answer to labor's diminishing ranks was obvious: to "organize."

Sweeney seemed a throwback to the glory days of sit-down strikes, class warfare, and radical rhetoric: As president of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), he had, among other things, commanded a "Justice for Janitors" campaign in Washington, D.C., that specialized in confrontational tactics and causing massive traffic jams along commuter routes. But somehow labor's renaissance never occurred. Every other year or so the media discover a new generation of undergraduates, fed up with decadence and materialism on campus, who plan to become labor organizers when they graduate. Perhaps the kids were diverted into investment banking; in any event, campaigns to organize workers in the past decade, particularly in the private sector, have been notably unsuccessful.

That was Strike One against Sweeney. Strike Two has been his dogged campaign to tie the fortunes of organized labor to the Democratic party; in particular, to transfer truckloads of (compulsory) dues and (voluntary) PAC contributions to the Democratic party, to MoveOn.org and its allies, and to individual candidates in campaigns to reclaim the White House, the state houses, and both houses of Congress from Republicans. And with what results? The Democrats are further removed from power in Washington, as well as state capitals, and the AFL-CIO is perceived as little more than a source of cash for the Democratic National Committee, a kind of blue-collar George Soros. Sweeney's strategic blunders have not just irritated the 43 percent of union households that voted for George W. Bush last year, but have stirred dissent in official ranks.

Sweeney's principal critic, Andrew Stern, the 54-year-old president of the SEIU, is a most unlikely labor leader: A product of New York's upper-middle class, and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, this one-time Ivy League radical has spent most of his career as a union bureaucrat and political operator. Like Sweeney in 1995, he insists that the AFL-CIO needs to concentrate its energies on organizing and broadening its ranks; unlike Sweeney, however, he seems to regard labor's marriage to the Democrats as a mixed blessing, at best, and legislative lobbying as a waste of time so long as Republicans control Congress.

Moreover, he does not appear to regard the Republican party, and George W. Bush, as sworn enemies of the American worker: On certain workplace issues, and in understanding the challenges of a global economy, Stern seems less dogmatic than Sweeney, less devoted to the European model of industrial relations, and prepared to work with the Bush administration, and congressional Republicans, when it suits his purposes. On outsourcing, for example, he has moved beyond the standard criticism of corporations to advocate "income-replacement and retraining programs that are suitable for skilled high-tech workers who need to constantly reinvent themselves."

So the SEIU, along with the Teamsters, walked away from the AFL-CIO on its golden anniversary to form a new federation—called the Change to Win Coalition—which may soon be joined by the Laborers' International Union, the United Food and Commercial Workers, and UNITE/-HERE, the old textile and hotel workers unions. This is, by any measure, a disaster for the AFL-CIO: The Teamsters and the SEIU are its largest unions, and the federation stands to lose a third of its membership. It is bad news for Democrats as well, for while the party has developed new sources of income through the Internet and 527s, a fractured labor movement means less money and less organizational assistance in election years. It is also a fair guess that the Bush White House, in the name of compassionate conservatism, will be searching for common ground with the dissidents.

Which may alter the face of organized labor, or not. John Sweeney remains in full control of a battered AFL-CIO, and Andy Stern has allied himself with two partners—the Teamsters and Laborers—best known for their historic corruption. It is possible that the Change to Win Coalition will thrive, and that competing federations may successfully coexist. It is equally possible that the long, historic decline of organized labor is irreversible, and that the 19th-century model for labor-management relations goes the way of the livery stable and the manual typewriter. ♦

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Wishful Thinking in Our Time

The Pentagon looks at China, and blinks.

BY GARY SCHMITT AND DAN BLUMENTHAL

MONTHS OVERDUE, the Pentagon's annual report to Congress on China's military power is a mix of happy talk, flabby strategic musings, and sobering facts. No doubt this analytic confusion explains the quite divergent news accounts of the report when it was released on July 19. The *New York Times*, for example, reported that the Defense Department had concluded that "China has not yet built the military power to have full confidence it can achieve its political objectives regarding Taiwan." Similarly, the *Financial Times*'s headline read simply: "Pentagon report stresses limits of China's military threat." In contrast, the *Washington Post* led with "Chinese Buildup Seen as Threat to Region," and focused on China's expanded ability to target the United States with nuclear weapons. Likewise, the *Wall Street Journal* read the report as warning that China's military buildup "could pose a threat to U.S. allies in Asia and upset the regional balance of power."

The one thing that is clear is that publication of this year's *Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China* was delayed while its initial and more alarming conclusions about China's strategic intent were toned down. Senior administration officials overruled the report's authors, professional analysts, and policy advisers at the Pentagon intent on providing an unvarnished account of China's military. And, contrary to conventional Washington wisdom, this was done not over the heads of the most senior ranks in the Pentagon but with their agreement.

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The resulting muddle is captured in the report's first substantive section ("Understanding China's Strategy"), which begins: "The EP-3 incident in April 2001 damaged U.S.-China relations. Thereafter, the United States developed a cooperative and constructive relationship with China in which the United States has stressed the values of candor and transparency." The report goes on to note China's role in the Six-Party talks with North Korea, its participation in talks to deal with its WTO compliance problems, the soon-to-begin, new "senior dialogue" between Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick and China's vice foreign minister Dai Bingguo, and expanded military-to-military exchanges.

Putting aside for a moment the strangely myopic choice to begin a discussion of China's larger strategic intentions with the forced downing of an American spy plane more than four years ago, the list of supposedly constructive developments is itself revealing. It shows how hard the administration has to search for good news, and even then, the list it comes up with is virtually all talk and no substance.

A more accurate picture would take note of China's noncompliance with its pledges to the World Trade Organization; its failure to use its leverage with North Korea to end Pyongyang's game of nuclear Russian roulette; its continuing refusal to abide by human rights and refugee conventions it has signed; its less-than-stellar nonproliferation record; its use of Chinese nationalism to browbeat Japan; its refusal to cooperate with the other great powers in the Proliferation Security Initiative; its obstructionist policies on Iran, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Burma; and of course its repeated threats to use military force to unify Taiwan with the mainland—and, if need be, engage in nuclear brinkmanship to prevent the United States from intervening to stop a forcible reunification. It is this fuller—but unstated—account of Chinese behavior that fits with the substantive heart of the report, documenting China's rapid and dramatic improvements in military capabilities.

What's new in this year's report is the finding that China's military buildup has begun to have serious implications not only for the cross-strait balance of power but also for the region as a whole.

The People's Liberation Army possesses a growing fleet of nuclear and diesel submarines, has 650-730 mobile ballistic missiles, and is working on aerial refueling for a significant percentage of its 2,600 combat aircraft. Toss in new and improved command, control, and communication systems and over-the-horizon targeting capabilities, and the picture that emerges is a China with military capabilities that are not just Taiwan-centric. While the report suggests that these capabilities "could pose a credible threat to other modern militaries operating in the region . . . over the long term, if current trends persist," most regional militaries are already worried. When Chinese ships and subs begin making clandestine trips into Japanese home waters—as they have—the signal being sent to Japan and the region is clear enough.

What's not new in the report is China's increasing military capacity to bring Taiwan to its knees. Last year's report judged that China could

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force Taiwan to accept unification with the mainland under certain conditions: "The campaign could succeed—barring third-party intervention—if Beijing were willing to accept the political, economic, diplomatic, and military costs that an invasion would produce." The point here is that Beijing does not believe a full-fledged invasion would be necessary to accomplish its goal. Rather, the PLA leadership, according to its own doctrinal papers, thinks a combination of ballistic-missile, special-operation, and aerial strikes could be sufficient to shock Taiwan's population and leadership into accepting Beijing's version of "one China."

For similar reasons, China is working hard to develop the capacity to blockade Taiwan. The submarine modernization program that the report details is extensive. Eight new quiet KILO-class diesels will soon be added to the four already in the arsenal; China's indigenous SONG diesel is now in serial production; and a new diesel submarine, the YUAN class, was launched last year. Chinese naval journals indicate a deep interest in blockading operations, and pay close attention to the vulnerabilities of Taiwan's island economy.

Such scenarios, of course, raise the question of what role the United States would or would not want to play in turning back Chinese aggression. Here, too, the answer is clear as day: China's military knows that it must be able to prevent, or, at least severely complicate, the American Navy's use of its aircraft carriers. To this end, as the new report spells out, China's antiship cruise missile force is growing by leaps and bounds. It has begun to field high-end, supersonic and subsonic cruise missiles on its new destroyers, attack boats, and submarines. It has even experimented with use of maneuverable, multiple-entry MRBMs and SRBMs to hit carrier battle groups. Once China solves the problem of longer-range detection and targeting, it will pose the most serious threat to American carriers in the world. And, in truth, when it comes to China's close-in waters, no serious American naval planner believes it would be safe sailing for American surface combatants, even as things stand today. As one PLA general remarked: "We have the ability to deal with an aircraft carrier that dares to get into our range of fire."

The report also details China's programs to upgrade its intercontinental ballistic missile force with new solid-fuel, road-mobile missiles and new sea-based, submarine-launched systems. The net effect will be a more survivable, more accurate, and more lethal nuclear strategic capability—aimed primarily at the United States. As General Zhu Chenghu, dean of China's National Defense University, not so subtly reminded American visitors recently: Should the United States intervene in a conflict between China and Taiwan, "the Americans will have to be prepared that hundreds . . . of [their] cities will be destroyed by the Chinese" nuclear weapons.

Combine the PLA's fascination with "carrier killing," its ability to degrade severely the operational utility of U.S. air bases in Japan through missile strikes, its aggressive pursuit of space and counterspace capabilities, and its upgraded nuclear arsenal, and you have a military that believes it has or is close to having the means to make any American president think twice before going to Taiwan's rescue.

Lazily, the U.S. government has accepted the Chinese propaganda line that these trends in Chinese military modernization are first designed to deter Taiwan "from moving toward *de jure* 'independence.'" Never mind that only a small minority in Taiwan supports taking that step (so even the most pro-independence politician in Taiwan would probably be unsuccessful in pushing the idea), China almost certainly would not be seeking these military capabilities to support a policy of mere deterrence. A few hundred missiles aimed at Taiwan could do that.

Obviously, China is interested in deterring Taiwan from declaring independence, but, more significantly, it is interested in pursuing its stated goal of "reuniting" Taiwan with the motherland—and it is in relation to this goal that the PLA's actions and plans make sense.

The Chinese Communist leadership has made clear time and again that it will not tolerate a prolonged separation of Taiwan from the mainland, and it has tasked the PLA, as earlier Pentagon reports indicated, with providing real military options. As this year's report notes (and as China's recent adoption of the Anti-Secession law essentially codifies): "The Chinese Communist Party came to power on its credentials as a defender of Chinese sovereignty; its leaders appear to see progress—or perhaps, the absence of failure—on the Taiwan issue as affecting the legitimacy of their rule."

But rather than face the facts presented in the report about the character and scope of China's military buildup, the tendency in the senior ranks of the administration is to wash over them with sound bites about our relationship with China being "good but complex." Or worse.

The day after the report was issued, in response to a question about the cross-strait military balance, Marine general Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, said, "There's lots of countries in the world that have the capacity to wage war," but "very few have the intent to do so. . . . There's absolutely no reason for us to believe there is any intent on [China's] part." *Absolutely?*

For one thing, as these annual Pentagon reports have repeatedly pointed out, China shrouds its military plans and senior decision-making in secrecy. But what we can observe could hardly lead anyone to think that we should be so confident about China's intentions. After all, this is the country that now ranks third in the world in overall defense spending, and the one that has increased its military budget fastest over the past decade, with growth in military expenditures outpacing even China's own remarkable growth in GDP. General Pace had

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better hope his statement doesn't go down in history alongside George Tenet's now infamous, "It's a slam dunk, Mr. President."

One theme that was added to this year's report is that China is at a "strategic crossroads." It faces one path leading to peaceful integration with its region and the world, the other to competition with the other significant powers in the region and with the United States. In one respect, this is a truism: Theoretically, any power, at any time, can choose to alter its relationships with the outside world. But the data at the heart of the Pentagon's report suggest that China is not at any crossroads; rather, it is already headed down a path previously taken by other autocratic, rapidly rising great powers. And until China undertakes major political reforms, it will probably stay on that path.

In reality, it is more accurate to say that the United States is at a strategic crossroads when it comes to China. With our plate full around the globe, we are understandably reluctant to raise publicly the prospect of a new great power competition. Nevertheless, the administration is doing quite a bit to contain Chinese military power—our upgraded relations with Japan, India, Vietnam, Singapore, and Australia are cases in point. But our reluctance to admit this publicly to ourselves or to our allies, and our rosy rhetoric about our "constructive" relationship with Beijing, leave us at a disadvantage as China ratchets up the competition. As a practical matter, this attitude often leaves us a day late and a dollar short when it comes to matching new Chinese initiatives.

Nor is our position sustainable. Beijing is not blind to our reaching out to the powers in the region. For it, the competition has already begun. The Pentagon's report provides ample evidence that this is the case, but then ducks the obvious conclusion. Preparing the Congress and the public for that competition should be a priority of the administration. Unfortunately, this year's report, for all its substantive merit, fails the test. ♦

The Summer of Solidarity

Twenty-five years ago, the first free labor union was born in the Communist world. BY ARCH PUDDINGTON

AUGUST MARKS the twenty-fifth anniversary of Solidarity, the Polish trade union that played so central a role in the defeat of communism. Celebrations will take place in Warsaw and Gdansk, the spiritual home of the Polish revolution. Lech Walesa and other heroes of the struggle against communism will be on hand. So will leaders of the recent revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia and representatives of democratic movements in Belarus, Iran, and Zimbabwe, as Solidarity remains a model for peaceful resistance to tyranny.

Solidarity's success was due to the courage, persistence, and sacrifice of the Polish people, and to the discipline of the Solidarity leadership. Despite the regime's policy of provocations, duplicity, and repression—Poland, remember, was under martial law for much of the 1980s—Solidarity eschewed violence and shunned those who advocated street fighting and sabotage.

The Polish revolution represents a signal achievement for American diplomacy. Indeed, Poland stands as the first and most notable example of what democracy-promotion can help bring about. American policy involved presidential leadership, public diplomacy, and private initiatives by organized labor and the Polish-American community. Although the use of economic sanctions was controversial and many worried about how our Poland policy would affect relations with the Soviets, the United States managed to be patient and consistent, in marked contrast to the confusion and mixed signals that have defined our approach to similar crises.

Of the institutions and individuals responsible for America's Polish policy, three merit special recognition: organized labor, Radio Free Europe, and Ronald Reagan.

When strikes erupted at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk in August 1980, the first outsider to recognize their potential significance was Lane Kirkland, the new president of the AFL-CIO. American labor had a long tradition of solidarity with freedom movements in the Communist world and had been a stalwart supporter of such leading dissidents as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Vladimir Bukovsky. But Kirkland saw in Solidarity something crucially different from previous stirrings: a movement that had captured the loyalty of the working class, the very class that, under Marxian theory, was destined to play the leading role in society. "For the first time a pluralistic institution has been accepted within a Communist regime," he presciently noted, "with consequences that could be quite far-reaching."

Kirkland was Solidarity's most redoubtable friend in the West. He used the influence of his position, his powers of persuasion, his clout in international circles, and the considerable resources of American labor to promote Solidarity, defend its activists, and punish its adversaries. He clashed with officials from three administrations. When Jimmy Carter's secretary of state, Edmund

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Muskie, urged Kirkland to drop plans to establish an aid fund for Polish workers on the grounds that such action might be regarded as provocative by the Soviets, Kirkland demurred. Later, he would chastise the Reagan administration for refusing to wage aggressive economic warfare against the Polish government and the Soviet Union.

Many European political leaders were distinctly unenthusiastic about Solidarity and resistant to any significant action against the Communist regime of General Wojciech Jaruzelski. Kirkland encountered this attitude during an angry meeting with Denis Healey, a leader of the British Labour party. "I think we should all pray for the success of General Jaruzelski," Healey told a stunned Kirkland shortly after martial law had been imposed in Poland. "The best we can hope for is stability, and General Jaruzelski represents stability."

But Kirkland held firm. The AFL-CIO developed lines of communication into Poland. The union sent money and, more critically, printing equipment to the underground Solidarity movement. Getting material past the border guards was tricky; sometimes, printing presses were brought in part by part, and then assembled by Solidarity activists. At other times, they were brought in on tour buses carrying elderly Polish emigrés from Western Europe. The result, however, was to make possible an underground press, which Solidarity used to remind Poles that hope was still alive and to spread subversive ideas about freedom. As one Solidarity leader put it, the printing presses were the equivalent of guns and tanks during wartime.

Radio Free Europe was also instrumental during the information blackout under martial law. Established in 1950 as a vehicle to broadcast news and commentary into the satellite countries of Eastern Europe, RFE had by the 1980s become the most important source of news in that region. Where the official press ignored news about Pope John Paul II, RFE reported his every utterance. And where the official media gave distorted coverage of labor unrest, RFE provided the facts, along with commentaries on their significance.

Radio Free Europe's coverage of Solidarity and martial law was thorough and hard-hitting, but also prudent. Aware of Poland's sensitive geopolitical position and wary about the American propensity to encourage revolution and then walk away when things didn't go as planned, broadcasters did not call for uprisings or open rebellion. Still, RFE was relentless in correcting the lies of Polish propaganda and keeping Poles informed about how the rest of the world viewed their plight. The regime regarded RFE as the glue that held the opposition together. The government's infamous spokesman, Jerzy Urban, once told an American reporter: "If you would close your Radio Free Europe, the underground would completely cease to exist."

Many European political leaders were distinctly unenthusiastic about Solidarity and resistant to any significant action against the Communist regime.

Polish listeners especially enjoyed RFE's broadcasts of President Reagan's statements about the impending demise of communism. While critics here and in Western Europe derided references to the "Evil Empire" and his consignment of Marxism to the "ash heap of history," Poles found such comments a refreshing change from the normal diplomatic discourse that stressed the permanent nature of the East-West divide. For the first time, a Western leader spoke of rolling back the Communist empire. More quietly, Reagan began piecing together a campaign for promoting democracy. He increased the budgets of RFE and the Voice of America and then established an entirely new institution, the National Endowment for Democracy, whose mission was to support democratic opposition in countries like Poland.

The role of American labor in Poland's struggle reminds us of the great potential of private institutions to influence the course of democratic struggle in societies under duress. But in addition to traditional American self-confidence, humility is needed when it comes to the freedom struggles of other societies. Kirkland made it a cardinal rule that the AFL-CIO would never pressure Solidarity towards a particular course of action, would never second-guess Solidarity's strategy, and would take its cue from Solidarity on such issues as economic sanctions.

The achievement of RFE reminds us of the virtue of patience. "Freedom radio" had been in existence for thirty years when Solidarity was established, and it was another nine years before the Berlin Wall came down. Today's policymakers would do well to remember that freedom is not won overnight.

And Reagan reminds us that the language of freedom can be potent when backed by sensible and confident diplomacy.

Finally, it's worth noting that those Americans who made the greatest contribution to Polish freedom genuinely believed in the appeal of democracy. When, in 1989, the Jaruzelski regime agreed to elections, many journalists and diplomats predicted that Poles would actually vote for the Communists, preferring "stability" to the uncertainty of freedom. Not Kirkland, Reagan, or the editors of RFE. They believed that Poles would choose freedom—and were right. The election was a clean sweep for Solidarity and a stunning defeat for communism. A few months later, East European communism disappeared, swept into history's dustbin by its own contradictions and by the courage and endurance of freedom's advocates. ♦

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Proud to Be Cheap

South Carolina's governor hones his small-government credentials. BY RACHEL DICARLO

Columbia, South Carolina

PERHAPS the most overused political tag these days is "budget hawk." It's embraced by Democrats who want to balance bloated budgets by raising taxes and by Republicans who want to cut taxes but have little appetite for spending cuts. Then there is a budget hawk like Mark Sanford, South Carolina's GOP governor, whose thrifty ways infect his politics as much as they do his personal life. "The governor is as cheap as everyone says he is," says his former press secretary. "It's not part of his image."

The aide describes a recent staff retreat at Sanford's 3,000-acre farm near Beaufort. For fun, the governor used an excavator to dig a hole in the ground, filled it with water, and dared everyone to walk across a 20-foot beam that spanned it. Halfway across the plank, the aide fell into the mud below. He figured his white pants were ruined, so he tossed them in the trash. The next morning at breakfast, Sanford announced that he had found the pants, removed them from the garbage, rinsed them, and hung them up to dry. He couldn't understand why anyone would throw away perfectly good clothing.

There are also stories that endear Sanford to South Carolina taxpayers, such as when mold was discovered in the governor's mansion, which had to be decontaminated. Rather than relocate their family to a publicly funded rental home, Sanford and his wife moved with their four sons (ages 13, 11, 9, and 6) into the mansion's one-room pool house for six weeks. When he first got into office he downsized his security detail and eschewed a black tie inaugural ball for a barbecue open to the public. Meanwhile, his wife cut the staff at the governor's mansion by 40 percent.

Sanford is an aberration among politicians in many ways. A millionaire former businessman, he has never accepted any PAC money. He often delivers stump speeches at places like Wal-Mart. His wife manages his campaigns. He doesn't require an aide to sit in the room when he talks to the press (and he lets aides tell embarrassing stories). And he enjoys meeting with his constituents: Sanford holds monthly "Open Door After Four" sessions when constituents can talk for five minutes each, make suggestions, or complain. One man wanted to have a beer with Sanford and the governor happily obliged. "He loves it," the former aide says.

Sanford's unique style has won over South Carolina voters. In 2002, he beat Democratic incumbent Jim Hodges by six points. Since he entered the statehouse in 2003, Sanford's approval ratings have risen from the mid-50s to 70 percent. Conservative groups love him. The CATO Institute named him one of the top governors in the country and the Club for Growth gave him a spot on their "Four for the Future" list. The American Conservative Union calls him "serious, courageous, and committed."

Some of his biggest critics, surprisingly, are fellow South Carolina Republicans. They control both chambers of the legislature and have joined Democrats in blocking Sanford from moving much of his agenda—mainly spending cuts.

Lee Bandy, a staff writer for South Carolina's *State* newspaper, says that at least some of the bad feelings are a result of Sanford's making the legislators feel unimportant. He doesn't schmooze them or invite them to the governor's mansion for a drink or take them out to lunch. "The governor does not like to wheel and deal," Bandy says.

Sanford points to another factor: A handful of South Carolina Republicans used to be Democrats. At least six sitting GOP legislators switched parties in the past decade to stay in the good graces of South Carolina's growing conservative electorate. "There are a lot of RINOs [Republicans in name only] here who want to please everybody," Sanford says. "You can't do that."

He campaigned on gradually phasing out the state income tax, but hasn't been able to move that through the legislature. He also tried to reform property taxes, but the legislature passed a bill that wasn't comprehensive enough and would have actually raised taxes on some people. Sanford vetoed it.

The hostility reached a peak last year, when the general assembly wrote money into the budget that was supposed to come from a tougher tax enforcement program. Since the money wasn't certain to materialize, and state trust funds had already been depleted by overspending, Sanford issued 106 line-item vetoes on that budget. The lawmakers overrode 105 of them.

To protest, Sanford showed up to the next session at the statehouse with two piglets—nicknamed Pork and Barrel—under his arms. "I told them to blame it on me," Sanford says. "I'll be the bad guy. I'll live with that. But once they rejected the vetoes I had to find a colorful way of representing what the voters already know—that there's too much pork."

The pig stunt enraged both parties in the legislature. "The governor needs to take his medication," Jim Harrison, a GOP representative from Columbia, told the *Greenville News*. "It's going to be very, very hard to

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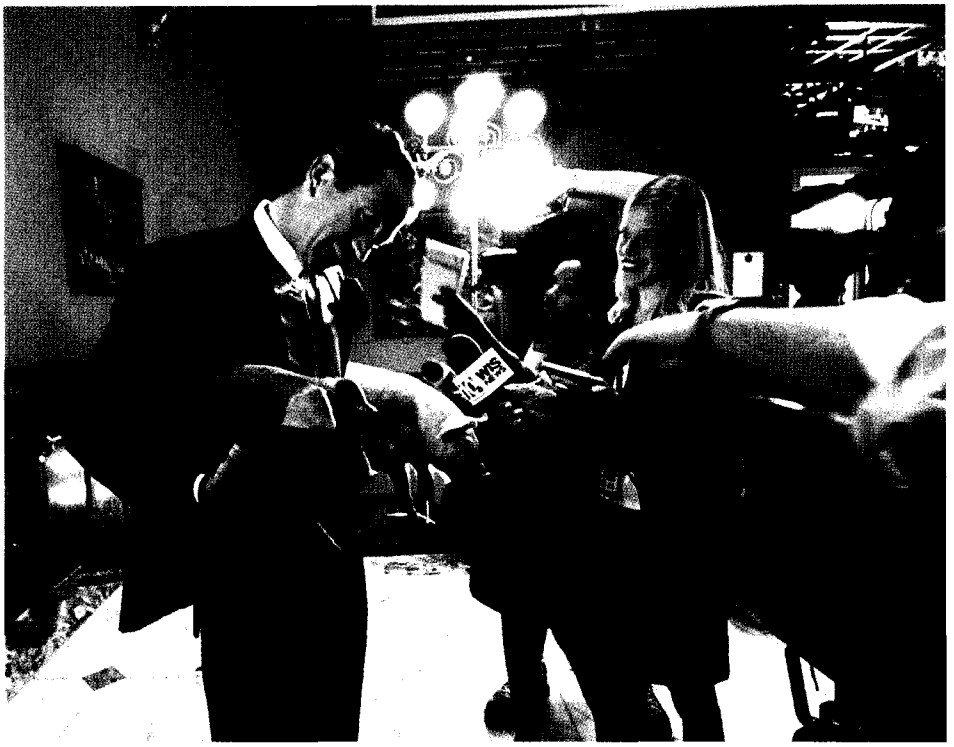

Mark Sanford with piglets Pork and Barrel

work with him after this," another Republican, Bob Leach, added. "I don't know if anything else will be accomplished at all."

This year, after $707 million in new revenue came in, Sanford set his sights on restoring $500 million to those reserve funds. When the budget landed on his desk, the general assembly had allowed only $117 million for the trust funds. So Sanford issued another 163 line-item vetoes, worth $95.9 million.

Republican (and former Democrat) Verne Smith, a 33-year veteran of the state senate, told the *News* that Sanford's vetoes were "mean-spirited." "He's just in that mindset, kind of a libertarian mindset," he continued. "I know I'm going to try and override every dad-jim one of [his vetoes] because I don't have any spirit for him."

Sanford brushes such criticism aside. "I'm acting in a way that's consistent with the promises I made voters," he says. "Ideology has nothing to do with it. It's the ultimate mean-spiritedness to allow government to grow faster than peoples' paychecks. . . . Rank and file folks I talk to don't want the government to grow faster than they can pay for it." As his wife Jenny Sanford puts it, "Mark and I would rather lose an election than do something that compromised our principles."

Sanford still has big plans for reform. He recently introduced the Taxpayer Empowerment Amendment, which would make it illegal for the government to spend more than yearly population growth plus inflation. Last year in South Carolina, the combined increase in population growth and inflation was only around 4 percent. Yet the budget grew by 9.1 percent. If Sanford can convince two-thirds of the legislature to vote for the amendment, it will show up on the ballot next November. Despite the past overrides, Sanford says he has talked to members in both houses and thinks it has a good chance of passing.

He makes it clear which legislators are on his side by posting a list of "Taxpayer Heroes" outside his office in the statehouse. He has also launched "Waste Watch," an email newsletter that urges supporters to vote for the amendment and asks for their suggestions on how to eliminate waste and inefficiency. Sanford says he'll publicly recognize the best idea at the end of the year.

In the meantime, he must also prep for his reelection bid in 2006. Sanford may face a primary challenge from Republican Oscar Lovelace, a doctor who has never held public office. Lovelace complains that Sanford hasn't provided leadership on education and health care issues. The doctor faces an uphill battle. Sanford already has over $3 million in the bank. "He can raise money like you wouldn't believe," Bandy says. "He'll have no trouble getting reelected."

Then what? As might be expected, Sanford's small-government conservatism has sparked presidential-race buzz. (There's already a "Draft Mark Sanford for President in 2008" petition pinging around the Internet.) Sanford has been to Washington before. He won a House seat in 1994, representing South Carolina's first district. In Congress, Sanford (surprise, surprise) voted against nearly every spending bill. He often bucked the GOP leadership with his friend Tom Coburn, the former Oklahoma congressman-turned-senator. "When our party didn't stand with us, we didn't stand with them," Coburn says. True to form, the frugal Sanford slept on a futon in his office and traveled back to his district as often as possible.

A true believer in "citizen-legislators," Sanford went home for good in 2000, when his self-imposed three-term limit was up. Asked why other politicians have such a hard time leaving Washington, he explains: "Everybody needs to be needed. They see their names in the paper and begin to think of themselves as irreplaceable. Politics should be more like musical chairs—as many people as possible should have a turn." As for a potential White House bid in the future? Sanford says he's "flattered," but "just trying to survive this week." ♦

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Why Truman Dropped the Bomb

Sixty years after Hiroshima, we now have the secret intercepts that shaped his decision.

By Richard B. Frank

The sixtieth anniversary of Hiroshima seems to be shaping up as a subdued affair—though not for any lack of significance. A survey of news editors in 1999 ranked the dropping of the atomic bomb on August 6, 1945, first among the top one hundred stories of the twentieth century. And any thoughtful list of controversies in American history would place it near the top again. It was not always so.

In 1945, an overwhelming majority of Americans regarded as a matter of course that the United States had used atomic bombs to end the Pacific war. They further believed that those bombs *had* actually ended the war and saved countless lives. This set of beliefs is now sometimes labeled by academic historians the "traditionalist" view. One unkindly dubbed it the "patriotic orthodoxy."

But in the 1960s, what were previously modest and scattered challenges of the decision to use the bombs began to crystallize into a rival canon. The challengers were branded "revisionists," but this is inapt. Any historian who gains possession of significant new evidence has a duty to revise his appreciation of the relevant events. These challengers are better termed critics.

The critics share three fundamental premises. The first is that Japan's situation in 1945 was catastrophically hopeless. The second is that Japan's leaders recognized that fact and were seeking to surrender in the summer of 1945. The third is that thanks to decoded Japanese diplomatic messages, American leaders knew that Japan was about to surrender when they unleashed needless nuclear devastation. The critics divide over what prompted the decision to drop the bombs in spite of the impending surrender, with the most provocative arguments focusing on Washington's desire to intimidate the Kremlin. Among an important stratum of American society—and still more perhaps abroad—the critics' interpretation displaced the traditionalist view.

These rival narratives clashed in a major battle over the exhibition of the Enola Gay, the airplane from which the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, at the Smithsonian Institution in 1995. That confrontation froze many people's understanding of the competing views. Since then, however, a sheaf of new archival discoveries and publications has expanded our understanding of the events of August 1945. This new evidence requires serious revision of the terms of the debate. What is perhaps the most interesting feature of the new findings is that they make a case President Harry S. Truman deliberately chose not to make publicly in defense of his decision to use the bomb.

When scholars began to examine the archival records in the 1960s, some intuited quite correctly that the accounts of their decision-making that Truman and members of his administration had offered in 1945 were at least incomplete. And if Truman had refused to disclose fully his thinking, these scholars reasoned, it must be because the real basis for his choices would undermine or even delegitimize his decisions. It scarcely seemed plausible to such critics—or to almost anyone else—that there could be any legitimate reason that the U.S. government would have concealed at the time, and would continue to conceal, powerful evidence that supported and explained the president's decisions.

But beginning in the 1970s, we have acquired an array of new evidence from Japan and the United States. By far the most important single body of this new evidence consists of secret radio intelligence material, and what it highlights is the painful dilemma faced by Truman and his administration. In explaining their decisions to the pub-

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lic, they deliberately forfeited their best evidence. They did so because under the stringent security restrictions guarding radio intercepts, recipients of this intelligence up to and including the president were barred from retaining copies of briefing documents, from making any public reference to them whatsoever at the time or in their memoirs, and from retaining any record of what they had seen or what they had concluded from it. With a handful of exceptions, they obeyed these rules, both during the war and thereafter.

Collectively, the missing information is known as *The Ultra Secret* of World War II (after the title of a breakthrough book by Frederick William Winterbotham published in 1974). Ultra was the name given to what became a vast and enormously efficient Allied radio intelligence organization, which secretly unveiled masses of information for senior policymakers. Careful listening posts snatched copies of millions of cryptograms from the air. Code breakers then extracted the true text. The extent of the effort is staggering. By the summer of 1945, Allied radio intelligence was breaking into a million messages a month from the Japanese Imperial Army alone, and many thousands from the Imperial Navy and Japanese diplomats.

Allied radio intelligence was reading the codes not just of the Axis powers, but also of some 30 other governments, including allies like France.

All of this effort and expertise would be squandered if the raw intercepts were not properly translated and analyzed and their disclosures distributed to those who needed to know. This is where Pearl Harbor played a role. In the aftermath of that disastrous surprise attack, Secretary of War Henry Stimson recognized that the fruits of radio intelligence were not being properly exploited. He set Alfred McCormack, a top-drawer lawyer with experience in handling complex cases, to the task of formulating a way to manage the distribution of information from Ultra. The system McCormack devised called for funneling all radio intelligence to a handful of extremely bright individuals who would evaluate the flood of messages, correlate them with all other sources, and then write daily summaries for policymakers.

By mid-1942, McCormack's scheme had evolved into a daily ritual that continued to the end of the war—and is in essence the system still in effect today. Every day, analysts prepared three mimeographed newsletters. Official couriers toting locked pouches delivered one copy of each summary to a tiny list of authorized recipients around the Washington area. (They also retrieved the previous day's distribution, which was then destroyed except for a file copy.) Two copies of each summary went to the White House, for the president and his chief of staff. Other copies went to a very select group of officers and civilian officials in the War and Navy Departments, the British Staff Mission, and the State Department. What is almost as interesting is the list of those *not* entitled to these top-level summaries: the vice president, any cabinet official outside the select few in the War, Navy, and State Departments, anyone in the Office of Strategic Services or the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or anyone in the Manhattan Project building the atomic bomb, from Major General Leslie Groves on down.

The three daily summaries were called the *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary*, the *"Magic" Far East Summary*, and the *European Summary*. ("Magic" was a code word coined by the U.S. Army's chief signal officer, who called his code breakers "magicians" and their product "Magic." The term "Ultra" came from the British and has generally prevailed as the preferred term among historians, but in 1945 "Magic" remained the American designation for radio intelligence, particularly that concerning the Japanese.) The *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary* covered intercepts from foreign diplomats all over the world. The *"Magic" Far East Summary* presented information on Japan's military, naval, and air situation. The *European Summary* paralleled the Far East summary in coverage and need not detain us. Each summary read like a newsmagazine. There were headlines and brief articles usually containing extended quotations from intercepts and commentary. The commentary was critical: Since no recipient retained any back issues, it was up to the editors to explain how each day's developments fitted into the broader picture.

When a complete set of the *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary* for the war years was first made public in 1978, the text contained a large number of redacted (literally whited out) passages. The critics reasonably asked whether the blanks concealed devastating revelations. Release of a nonredacted complete set in 1995 disclosed that the redacted areas had indeed contained a devastating revelation—but not about the use of the atomic bombs. Instead, the redacted areas concealed the embarrassing fact that Allied radio intelligence was reading the codes not just of the Axis powers, but also of some 30 other governments, including allies like France.

The diplomatic intercepts included, for example, those of neutral diplomats or attachés stationed in Japan. Critics

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highlighted a few nuggets from this trove in the 1978 releases, but with the complete release, we learned that there were only 3 or 4 messages suggesting the possibility of a compromise peace, while no fewer than 13 affirmed that Japan fully intended to fight to the bitter end. Another page in the critics' canon emphasized a squad of Japanese diplomats in Europe, from Sweden to the Vatican, who attempted to become peace entrepreneurs in their contacts with American officials. As the editors of the *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary* correctly made clear to American policymakers during the war, however, not a single one of these men (save one we will address shortly) possessed actual authority to act for the Japanese government.

An inner cabinet in Tokyo authorized Japan's only officially sanctioned diplomatic initiative. The Japanese dubbed this inner cabinet the Big Six because it comprised just six men: Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki, Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo, Army Minister Korechika Anami, Navy Minister Mitsumasa Yonai, and the chiefs of staff of the Imperial Army (General Yoshijiro Umezu) and Imperial Navy (Admiral Soemu Toyoda). In complete secrecy, the Big Six agreed on an approach to the Soviet Union in June 1945. This was not to ask the Soviets to deliver a "We surrender" note; rather, it aimed to enlist the Soviets as mediators to negotiate an end to the war satisfactory to the Big Six—in other words, a peace on terms satisfactory to the dominant militarists. Their minimal goal was not confined to guaranteed retention of the Imperial Institution; they also insisted on preservation of the old militaristic order in Japan, the one in which they ruled.

The conduit for this initiative was Japan's ambassador in Moscow, Naotake Sato. He communicated with Foreign Minister Togo—and, thanks to code breaking, with American policymakers. Ambassador Sato emerges in the intercepts as a devastating cross-examiner ruthlessly unmasking for history the feebleness of the whole enterprise. Sato immediately told Togo that the Soviets would never bestir themselves on behalf of Japan. The foreign minister could only insist that Sato follow his instructions. Sato demanded to know whether the government and the military supported the overture and what its legal basis was—after all, the official Japanese position, adopted in an Imperial Conference in June 1945 with the emperor's sanction, was a fight to the finish. The ambassador also demanded that Japan state concrete terms to end the war, otherwise the effort could not be taken seriously. Togo responded evasively that the "directing powers" and the government had authorized the effort—he did not and could not claim that the military in general supported it or that the fight-to-the-end policy had been replaced. Indeed, Togo added: "Please bear particularly in mind, however, that we are not seeking the Russians' mediation for anything like an unconditional surrender."

This last comment triggered a fateful exchange. Critics have pointed out correctly that both Under Secretary of State Joseph Grew (the former U.S. ambassador to Japan and the leading expert on that nation within the government) and Secretary of War Henry Stimson advised Truman that a guarantee that the Imperial Institution would not be eliminated could prove essential to obtaining Japan's surrender. The critics further have argued that if only the United States had made such a guarantee, Japan would have surrendered. But when Foreign Minister Togo informed Ambassador Sato that Japan was not looking for anything like unconditional surrender, Sato promptly wired back a cable that the editors of the *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary* made clear to American policymakers "advocate[s] unconditional surrender provided the Imperial House is preserved." Togo's reply, quoted in the *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary* of July 22, 1945, was adamant: American policymakers could read for themselves Togo's rejection of Sato's proposal—with not even a hint that a guarantee of the Imperial House would be a step in the right direction. Any rational person following this exchange would conclude that modifying the demand for unconditional surrender to include a promise to preserve the Imperial House would not secure Japan's surrender.

Togo's initial messages—indicating that the emperor himself endorsed the effort to secure Soviet mediation and was prepared to send his own special envoy—elicited immediate attention from the editors of the *"Magic" Diplomatic Summary*, as well as Under Secretary of State Grew. Because of Grew's documented advice to Truman on the importance of the Imperial Institution, critics feature him in the role of the sage counsel. What the intercept evidence discloses is that Grew reviewed the Japanese effort and concurred with the U.S. Army's chief of intelligence, Major General Clayton Bissell, that the effort most likely represented a ploy to play on American war weariness. They deemed the possibility that it manifested a serious effort by the emperor to end the war "remote." Lest there be any doubt about Grew's mindset, as late as August 7, the day after Hiroshima, Grew drafted a memorandum with an oblique reference to radio intelligence again affirming his view that Tokyo still was not close to peace.

Starting with the publication of excerpts from the diaries of James Forrestal in 1951, the contents of a few of the diplomatic intercepts were revealed, and for decades the critics focused on these. But the release of the complete (unredacted) *"Magic" Far East Summary*, supplementing the *Diplomatic Summary*, in the 1990s

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revealed that the diplomatic messages amounted to a mere trickle by comparison with the torrent of military intercepts. The intercepts of Japanese Imperial Army and Navy messages disclosed without exception that Japan's armed forces were determined to fight a final Armageddon battle in the homeland against an Allied invasion. The Japanese called this strategy Ketsu Go (Operation Decisive). It was founded on the premise that American morale was brittle and could be shattered by heavy losses in the initial invasion. American politicians would then gladly negotiate an end to the war far more generous than unconditional surrender.

Ultra was even more alarming in what it revealed about Japanese knowledge of American military plans. Intercepts demonstrated that the Japanese had correctly anticipated precisely where U.S. forces intended to land on Southern Kyushu in November 1945 (Operation Olympic). American planning for the Kyushu assault reflected adherence to the military rule of thumb that the attacker should outnumber the defender at least three to one to assure success at a reasonable cost. American estimates projected that on the date of the landings, the Japanese would have only three of their six field divisions on all of Kyushu in the southern target area where nine American divisions would push ashore. The estimates allowed that the Japanese would possess just 2,500 to 3,000 planes total throughout Japan to face Olympic. American aerial strength would be over four times greater.

MacArthur, amazingly, did not believe the radio intelligence. He vehemently urged the invasion should go forward as planned.

From mid-July onwards, Ultra intercepts exposed a huge military buildup on Kyushu. Japanese ground forces exceeded prior estimates by a factor of four. Instead of 3 Japanese field divisions deployed in southern Kyushu to meet the 9 U.S. divisions, there were 10 Imperial Army divisions plus additional brigades. Japanese air forces exceeded prior estimates by a factor of two to four. Instead of 2,500 to 3,000 Japanese aircraft, estimates varied between about 6,000 and 10,000. One intelligence officer commented that the Japanese defenses threatened "to grow to [the] point where we attack on a ratio of one (1) to one (1) which is not the recipe for victory."

Concurrent with the publication of the radio intelligence material, additional papers of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been released in the last decade. From these, it is clear that there was no true consensus among the Joint Chiefs of Staff about an invasion of Japan. The Army, led by General George C. Marshall, believed that the critical factor in achieving American war aims was time. Thus, Marshall and the Army advocated an invasion of the Home Islands as the fastest way to end the war. But the long-held Navy view was that the critical factor in achieving American war aims was casualties. The Navy was convinced that an invasion would be far too costly to sustain the support of the American people, and hence believed that blockade and bombardment were the sound course.

The picture becomes even more complex than previously understood because it emerged that the Navy chose to postpone a final showdown over these two strategies. The commander in chief of the U.S. fleet, Admiral Ernest King, informed his colleagues on the Joint Chiefs of Staff in April 1945 that he did not agree that Japan should be invaded. He concurred only that the Joint Chiefs must issue an invasion order immediately to create that option for the fall. But King predicted that the Joint Chiefs would revisit the issue of whether an invasion was wise in August or September. Meanwhile, two months of horrendous fighting ashore on Okinawa under skies filled with kamikazes convinced the commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, Admiral Chester Nimitz, that he should withdraw his prior support for at least the invasion of Kyushu. Nimitz informed King of this change in his views in strict confidence.

In August, the Ultra revelations propelled the Army and Navy towards a showdown over the invasion. On August 7 (the day after Hiroshima, which no one expected to prompt a quick surrender), General Marshall reacted to weeks of gathering gloom in the Ultra evidence by asking General Douglas MacArthur, who was to command what promised to be the greatest invasion in history, whether invading Kyushu in November as planned still looked sensible. MacArthur replied, amazingly, that he did not believe the radio intelligence! He vehemently urged the invasion should go forward as planned. (This, incidentally, demolishes later claims that MacArthur thought the Japanese were about to surrender at the time of Hiroshima.)

On August 9 (the day the second bomb was dropped, on Nagasaki), King gathered the two messages in the exchange between Marshall and MacArthur and sent them to Nimitz. King told Nimitz to provide his views on the viability of invading Kyushu, with a copy to MacArthur. Clearly, nothing that had transpired since May would have altered Nimitz's view that Olympic was unwise. Ultra now made the invasion appear foolhardy to everyone but MacArthur. But King had not placed a deadline on Nimitz's response, and the Japanese surrender on August 15 allowed Nimitz to avoid starting what was cer-

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tain to be one of the most tumultuous interservice battles of the whole war.

What this evidence illuminates is that one central tenet of the traditionalist view is wrong—but with a twist. Even with the full ration of caution that any historian should apply anytime he ventures comments on paths history did not take, in this instance it is now clear that the long-held belief that Operation Olympic loomed as a certainty is mistaken. Truman's reluctant endorsement of the Olympic invasion at a meeting in June 1945 was based in key part on the fact that the Joint Chiefs had presented it as their unanimous recommendation. (King went along with Marshall at the meeting, presumably because he deemed it premature to wage a showdown fight. He did comment to Truman that, of course, any invasion authorized then could be canceled later.) With the Navy's withdrawal of support, the terrible casualties in Okinawa, and the appalling radio-intelligence picture of the Japanese buildup on Kyushu, Olympic was not going forward as planned and authorized—period. But this evidence also shows that the demise of Olympic came not because it was deemed unnecessary, but because it had become unthinkable. It is hard to imagine anyone who could have been president at the time (a spectrum that includes FDR, Henry Wallace, William O. Douglas, Harry Truman, and Thomas Dewey) failing to authorize use of the atomic bombs in this circumstance.

The Japanese did not see their situation as catastrophically hopeless. They were not seeking to surrender, but pursuing a negotiated end to the war.

Japanese historians uncovered another key element of the story. After Hiroshima (August 6), Soviet entry into the war against Japan (August 8), and Nagasaki (August 9), the emperor intervened to break a deadlock within the government and decide that Japan must surrender in the early hours of August 10. The Japanese Foreign Ministry dispatched a message to the United States that day stating that Japan would accept the Potsdam Declaration, "with the understanding that the said declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a Sovereign Ruler." This was not, as critics later asserted, merely a humble request that the emperor retain a modest figurehead role. As Japanese historians writing decades after the war emphasized, the demand that there be no compromise of the "prerogatives of His Majesty as a Sovereign Ruler" as a precondition for the surrender was a demand that the United States grant the emperor veto power over occupation reforms and continue the rule of the old order in Japan. Fortunately, Japan specialists in the State Department immediately realized the actual purpose of this language and briefed Secretary of State James Byrnes, who insisted properly that this maneuver must be defeated. The maneuver further underscores the fact that right to the very end, the Japanese pursued twin goals: not only the preservation of the imperial system, but also preservation of the old order in Japan that had launched a war of aggression that killed 17 million.

This brings us to another aspect of history that now very belatedly has entered the controversy. Several American historians led by Robert Newman have insisted vigorously that any assessment of the end of the Pacific war must include the horrifying consequences of each continued day of the war for the Asian populations trapped within Japan's conquests. Newman calculates that between a quarter million and 400,000 Asians, overwhelmingly noncombatants, were dying each month the war continued. Newman et al. challenge whether an assessment of Truman's decision can highlight only the deaths of noncombatant civilians in the aggressor nation while ignoring much larger death tolls among noncombatant civilians in the victim nations.

There are a good many more points that now extend our understanding beyond the debates of 1995. But it is clear that all three of the critics' central premises are wrong. The Japanese did not see their situation as catastrophically hopeless. They were not seeking to surrender, but pursuing a negotiated end to the war that preserved the old order in Japan, not just a figurehead emperor. Finally, thanks to radio intelligence, American leaders, far from knowing that peace was at hand, understood—as one analytical piece in the *"Magic" Far East Summary* stated in July 1945, after a review of both the military and diplomatic intercepts—that "until the Japanese leaders realize that an invasion can not be repelled, there is little likelihood that they will accept any peace terms satisfactory to the Allies." This cannot be improved upon as a succinct and accurate summary of the military and diplomatic realities of the summer of 1945.

The displacement of the so-called traditionalist view within important segments of American opinion took several decades to accomplish. It will take a similar span of time to displace the critical orthodoxy that arose in the 1960s and prevailed roughly through the 1980s, and replace it with a richer appreciation for the realities of 1945. But the clock is ticking. ♦

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Hurricane Hugo

Venezuela's Hugo Chávez is a threat to more than just his own people

By Thor Halvorssen

Caracas, Venezuela

"Imagine our joy at being free and far from a land in which everything threatened us with death." The young refugee's words leap off the tattered clipping from a 1939 edition of *La Esfera*, a Venezuelan newspaper. "It is such a holy occurrence given that we were expelled from Germany and you have embraced us." The refugee had arrived on one of two steamboats—the *Koenigstein* and the *Caribia*—that left Nazi Germany that year with a human cargo that would otherwise have been sentenced to death. The ships eventually docked in Venezuela, and the passengers who disembarked significantly increased the size of Venezuela's Jewish community, which eventually grew to 45,000 people.

Sixty-five years later, an exodus of that community is well underway. The reason is not far to seek. The land that embraced those refugees has become unfriendly. Consider the traumatic morning of November 29, 2004. As parents and school buses delivered children to Colegio Hebraica, a Jewish grade school in Caracas, 25 secret police commandos in combat gear and face masks burst into the main building. Scores of preschoolers were locked in the school as panicked parents tried to retrieve them. The children were eventually freed, but the raid went on.

The government-appointed judge who ordered the raid said the commandos were looking for weapons linked to a bombing that killed Danilo Anderson, a crooked local prosecutor who had made a fortune shaking down the government's political opponents. The raid followed speculation aired on a state-run television station that Anderson's killing was the work of Mossad, the Israeli foreign intelligence agency; presumably this guesswork justified the storming of a Jewish elementary school.

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The Hebraica raid was not an isolated or random act of state-sponsored anti-Jewish violence. Hostility to Jews has become one of the hallmarks of the Venezuelan government under Hugo Chávez, the radical populist who became president in 1999, and of Chavismo, the neofascist ideology named for him. In January, the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor released a "Report on Global Anti-Semitism." The report documents how openly anti-Semitic the Venezuelan government now is. Besides the raid on the Jewish school, it noted that "President Chávez cautioned citizens against following the lead of Jewish citizens in the effort to overturn his referendum victory. Anti-Semitic leaflets also were available to the public in an Interior and Justice Ministry office waiting room."

Chávez first ran for president on a reform platform, winning in a landslide. What few understood then was that Chávez planned to revolutionize the country following a plan masterminded by his longtime friend Norberto Ceresole, an Argentinian writer infamous for his books denying the Holocaust and his conspiracy theories about Jewish plans to control the planet.

The title of Ceresole's 1999 book on Chávez and Venezuela, *Caudillo, Ejército, Pueblo* ("Leader, Army, People"), eerily recalls the German national socialist maxim, "One People, One Country, One Leader." (The first chapter is titled "The Jewish Question and the state of Israel.") After denying the Holocaust, he explains that the greatest threat to Chavismo comes from the Jews of Venezuela. A self-described Communist and fascist, Ceresole became an expert in national socialism after designing Juan Domingo Perón's electoral platform in Argentina. In Ceresole's hands, representative democracy mutates into "participatory" systems led by cult-like figures; tellingly, Chávez praises the "participatory democracy" of Libya, Syria, Iran, and Cuba. Ceresole's structure channels the people's will through the charismatic strongman; the military functions as the central political body. Ceresole's roadmap for Venezuela suffered some setbacks, including a 2002 coup that displaced Chávez for 48 hours and a national strike that almost

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toppled the government. But Venezuela's dramatic political metamorphosis was nonetheless complete by the time Ceresole died in 2003.

Chavismo's purpose, however, is not just to create a stable autocracy. At its core is a far-reaching foreign policy that aims to establish a loosely aligned federation of revolutionary republics as a resistance bloc in the Americas. The Chavista worldview sees the globe as a place where the United States, Europe, and Israel must be opposed by militarized one-man regimes.

In an interview with Voice of America in 1999, the late Constantine Menges of the Hudson Institute predicted that "Chávez will stir up revolution and violence throughout Latin America. The longer he is in power, the more he can use the oil wells of Venezuela to do so." When Menges spoke, the price of oil had briefly dipped below $10 per barrel. Since then, oil prices have quintupled, making the Chávez government the richest in Venezuelan history and vastly multiplying the damage it can do.

There is now incontrovertible evidence, for instance, that Chávez has financed, harbored, and supplied weapons to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, Colombia's narcoterrorists. Last December, high-ranking FARC terrorist Rodrigo Granda was arrested in Caracas. Granda had been living in baronial splendor under the protection—and at the expense—of the Chávez government. Bounty hunters kidnapped Granda and drove him to Colombia, where he is now imprisoned and awaiting trial. Days after the arrest, El Salvador president Antonio Saca announced plans to investigate ties between Chávez and his country's FMLN terrorist organization. In Nicaragua, Chávez has funded Daniel Ortega's Sandinista party; in Bolivia, he funds Evo Morales, the leader of the coca-growers' movement.

But Chávez's ambitions extend beyond the Americas. He has signed treaties for "technological cooperation" with the dictators of Libya, Iran, and Syria. He has numerous business interests in those countries, and has publicly described the terror-sponsors who rule them as his "partners" and "friends." The feeling is mutual. Iran and Libya have hundreds of millions invested in Venezuela. Significantly, Chávez was the only foreign leader to visit Saddam Hussein after the first Gulf war. During his visit he embraced Saddam and called him "brother."

There is no sign that these alliances proceed from anything other than Chávez's deepest convictions. Less than a month after taking office, Chávez wrote a fan letter to Illich Ramirez Sanchez, the Venezuelan-born terrorist imprisoned at La Santé maximum-security prison outside Paris. Popularly known as "Carlos the Jackal," Sanchez began his long, bloody career by shooting Joseph Sieff, a Jewish businessman in London. He committed terrorist bombings in France, hijacked airliners, and kidnapped the OPEC ministers in Vienna. After retiring to the Sudan, he was captured and sent to France to stand trial for murdering two Parisian police officers. Yet Chávez addressed Sanchez as "Distinguished Compatriot" and lavished praise on him. He described himself as "swimming in the profundities expressed in [Sanchez's] letter," and signed off "with profound faith in the cause and the mission." When the letter was leaked, Chávez dismissed all criticism and said he was simply expressing solidarity with a fellow Venezuelan.

That expression of solidarity is chilling. During the last six years, Chávez has restructured Venezuela's institutions and policies to extend his rule; he has concentrated his power, and he has disabled the democratic opposition. Always proceeding with the patina of popular support and the pretense of legality, he has used a constituent assembly to establish a new constitution giving him wide powers. He has packed the courts with loyal judges and purged the military of anyone who might oppose his orders. The Chávez government has severely restricted freedom of the press, most recently banning any public or private expression of opposition to the government. After winning a Jimmy Carter-endorsed August 2004 referendum marred by accusations of fraud and voter harassment, Chávez revved up his revolutionary project. The raid on Colegio Hebraica was a significant shift in the politics of intimidation.

Predictably, the storming of Hebraica turned up nothing and the police publicly acknowledged that the search had been "unfruitful." Of course, the raid was fruitful insofar as it sent a message to the Jewish community. Venezuela's chief rabbi denounced the raid's "economy of intimidation," noting that "there is not a single Jewish family in Caracas that was not affected. Many of us have children in the school, grandchildren, great-grandchildren—or friends. An attack on the school is the most effective way of jolting the entire Jewish population."

And, as it happened, on the same day Hebraica was raided, Chávez was on a state visit to Iran. Just that morning, the *Tehran Times* had quoted his praise of President Khatami and the Iranian theocracy. Analysts in Venezuela suspect the true purpose of the raid originated in Chávez's eagerness to display solidarity with the Iranian mullahs. Chávez had traveled to Iran by way of

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Hugo Chávez

Venezuelan oil exports to the United States.

In addition to his ideological alliances, petro-politics, and support for guerrilla terror throughout Latin America, Chávez has begun expanding Venezuela's military capability. In the past year he has more than tripled the Venezuelan military budget, purchasing 20 high-performance MiG fighter jets and 100,000 AK-47 machine gun rifles from the Russian government as well as an unprecedented number of helicopter gunships, surface-to-air missiles, and Onyx missiles (which can sink aircraft carriers). This spring, Chávez defended Iran's nuclear development program after warmly receiving their president in Venezuela and signing new "technological" treaties. In March he announced the creation of a two-million man reserve army to defend the revolution "against the American invasion."

Tripoli, where he described himself as "bathed in honor" after receiving the fantastically named Muammar Qaddafi Prize for Human Rights. In his acceptance speech Chávez was unequivocal: The "time is right to unite and face the imperialist challenge. Like Yasser Arafat, I now have only the revolutionary's gun since the olive branch has fallen."

Days afterward, Chávez accused Washington of unleashing "real terrorism" in Iraq and called for a "jihad" on American imperialism. Appearing on Al Jazeera, he described President Bush's foreign policy as vigilante violence: "It is not a war on terrorism, it is terrorism itself." From Iran, Chávez traveled to China, where he announced that China would replace the United States as the principal beneficiary of Venezuelan oil. By the end of his trip, Chávez had signed agreements with President Hu Jintao granting the China National Petroleum Corporation control of 15 Venezuelan oil fields, thereby securing for China a billion barrels of Venezuelan crude. Shortly after, Chávez declared himself a Marxist-Leninist in a speech in Calcutta. He then signed petroleum agreements with the Indian government while again indicating his desire to cut off

The Venezuelan opposition is a loose-knit, underfunded network of individuals and small organizations powerless to offer much more than moral opposition to Chavismo. The military hierarchy is incapable, after six years of demoralization, rampant corruption, and regular purges, of restoring any semblance of constitutional order. Any effective response to Chavismo will have to be, in part, international.

Most important for now is persistent public exposure of Chávez's increasing militarism, assaults on democracy, human rights abuses, and free speech violations, as well as his involvement with terrorist groups in South America and terror sponsors in the Middle East. Such exposure will ideally arouse international public opinion against Chávez and nurture new leadership inside Venezuela that will provide democratic alternatives to Chavismo.

Under Chávez, more than one million Venezuelans have voted with their feet in the largest political exodus in Latin America since the Cuban migrations of the 1960s. Venezuela's Jewish community has been halved over the past six years. Many of the children and grandchildren of those who arrived on the *Koenigstein* and *Caribia* have now left the country. Fortunately, there are no exit restrictions—yet. ♦

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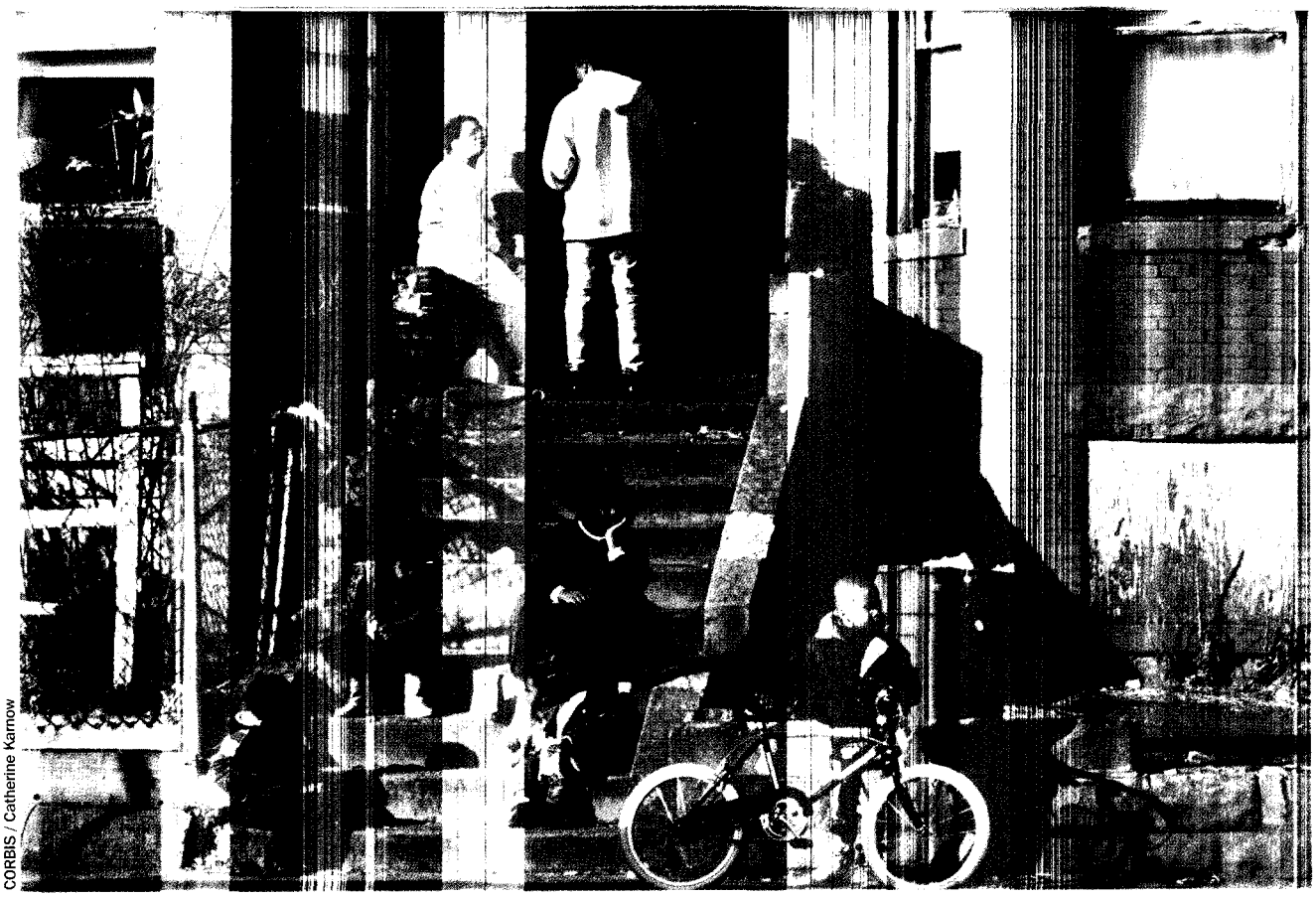

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Handing Down Misery

A dissenting view on cultural decline By Michael Barone

Thomas Sowell is fascinated by differences. Why have the Jews and the overseas Chinese succeeded at commerce, and why do so many people in the countries where they have succeeded hate these "middleman minorities"? Why do some black children succeed admirably in some schools while most black children perform poorly, even in such a favorable environment as Shaker Heights, Ohio? Why do American academic and media elites treat slavery as a predominantly American phenomenon when it was a feature of most societies everywhere until well into the 19th century?

These are some of the questions Sowell addresses in this provocatively titled collection of essays. It is a collection united around some fundamental theses, none of them fashionable today. All cultures are not equal, and Western culture is far better than others. Different kinds of people behave in different ways, largely because of differences in culture. The good news from Sowell is that people's cultures can be changed. The bad news is that for many, and notably for most black Americans, culture seems to be leading the young in the wrong direction.

Black Rednecks and White Liberals
by Thomas Sowell
Encounter, 355 pp., $25.95

In the "redneck" direction, as he puts it. I confess I am uncomfortable with the word. Sowell uses it to refer to immigrants to the American colonies from the north of England, Scotland, and the province (he unfortunately calls it a county) of Ulster and their progeny, most of whom settled in much of the South. Following David Hackett Fischer's *Albion's Seed*, he notes that these immigrants brought with them folkways, patterns of belief, and behavior, which were distinctive from those of immigrants from other portions of the British Isles who settled in other parts of the colonies and were particularly different from the East Anglians who peopled New England.

"The cultural values and social patterns prevalent among Southern whites included an aversion to work, proneness to violence, neglect of education, sexual promiscuity, improvidence, drunkenness, lack of entrepreneurship, reckless searches for excitement, lively music and dance, and a style of religious oratory marked by strident rhetoric, unbridled emotions, and flamboyant imagery." These were

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transmitted, Sowell argues, to southern blacks—although, in fact, most colonial blacks lived in the southern tidelands, which Fischer says were settled by rather different folk from the West Country of England, people more like Thomas Jefferson than Andrew Jackson. But leave that aside. Sowell makes a convincing case that the folkways described by Grady McWhiney in *Cracker Culture* are similar to those of ghetto blacks today: "What is painfully ironic is that such attitudes and behaviors are projected today as aspects of a distinctive 'black identity,'" he writes, "when in fact they are part of a centuries-old pattern among the whites in whose midst generations of blacks lived in the South."

This is not the only place where Sowell challenges the currently received version of the history of blacks in America and presents his own alternative. Among American academic and media elites it is taken as given that American slavery was motivated by anti-black racism, and was a peculiarly and uniquely vicious institution. Nonsense, says Sowell. Slavery existed everywhere in the world up through the 19th century, and peoples of all kinds—Europeans as well as Africans, Asians as well as Slavs (who gave their name to slavery), white Americans captured by the Barbary pirates—were enslaved at one time or another. Whites were indentured servants in colonial America. Slavery in America produced racism, he argues, not the other way around.

And despite that racism, American blacks moved forward after Emancipation. Sowell writes at some length of the practical difficulties faced by southern slaveholders—especially George Washington and John Randolph of Roanoke—who wanted to free their slaves. But he concentrates less on what he calls white treatment of blacks and more on the actions of blacks themselves.

He describes the rapid advances in literacy and learning made by blacks in the "missionary schools" established by New Englanders in the South. He records the brilliant achievements of Dunbar High School in Washington from 1870 to 1955. He argues that there was less difference between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, and more mutual respect, than is generally thought. He points out that northern blacks outscored southern whites in armed forces tests in World War I, and that the sharp differences in black and white test scores so common today did not exist then, when there were sharper differences between the scores of various groups of whites.

But if there was achievement, there was also backsliding. The first black presidents of historically black colleges, Sowell says, were unqualified and deemphasized academic achievement and overemphasized social activities. Even so, blacks made steady and impressive gains in education and income in the 1940s and 1950s.

The real disaster came, in Sowell's view, in the 1960s. The high incidence of unmarried parenthood among blacks was not a legacy of slavery or segregation. The expansion of welfare encouraged single parenthood; weak law enforcement resulted in high crime that destroyed housing values in black neighborhoods; cultivation of a sense of grievance encouraged "redneck" patterns of behavior, "the counterproductive attitudes toward education found even in middle-class black communities."

Even so, Sowell points out, there are schools that produce high levels of achievement in black students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. What do they have in common? They insist on hard work. They insist that students can meet the standards of the larger society.

And here we come to a major difference between Sowell and the academic and media elites. The latter see Western society in the same terms Susan Sontag once used to describe the white race, as "the cancer of human history." They have a desperate psychological stake in proclaiming that all cultures are morally equal—and to regard Western culture as morally inferior.

Sowell is of another view: The West is best. Human slavery was tolerated, taken for granted, not seen as even something to argue about, in all cultures for centuries and millennia—until, in the 18th century, certain Britons and Americans began to question its morality. In England, the evangelical Anglican William Wilberforce led a move to ban the slave trade, and in 1807, Parliament did so. Not only that: For decades, the Royal Navy spent thousands of pounds and lost hundreds of sailors in efforts to suppress the slave trade in the Atlantic—successfully—and less successfully in Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Americans joined in. George Washington, troubled by slavery, refused to sell any of his slaves after 1775 and, in

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his will, freed his slaves and provided support for them after his death in 1799. In 1808, the first date allowed under the Constitution, Congress banned the importation of slaves and the U.S. Navy aided the Royal Navy in suppressing the slave trade abroad. When the United States acquired the Philippines in 1898, it suppressed slavery there, over the objections of many locals.

Only in the West, Sowell writes, did the movement to end slavery win support. The United States, as a result of its bloodiest war, abolished slavery. The end of slavery in Brazil a quarter-century later was met with general rejoicing. In contrast, the rulers of the Ottoman Empire, native princes in India, and Arab slave traders in East Africa treated demands to end slavery with contempt. Slavery was largely eradicated thanks to the superior military power of British, American, and other imperialist powers.

Sadly, slavery still continues, in Sudan, in some other African countries, in parts of Asia, in places where the West has not yet summoned up the determination to end it. Slavery is and always was a great evil, Sowell stoutly affirms. But Westerners were not its only perpetrators. And they were its only abolitionists.

That, of course, is something you will never hear from the offspring of the 1960s radicals who dominate our campuses and hold sway over most of our media. They are committed to an adversarial stance against their own society, the society that has produced the greatest freedom and prosperity human beings have enjoyed in history.

Some day their distorted view of history may be forgotten, just as some of their disastrous public policies—overgenerous welfare, toleration of crime—have been discarded. But the cultural attitudes they have fostered still permeate large segments of our society and hold back those (especially blacks from disadvantaged backgrounds) from the achievements of which they are capable. Against this, Thomas Sowell brings to bear his wide learning and fierce powers of argumentation. May he prevail. ♦

In Search of Dad

A big, fat, heavily italicized new novel from John Irving. **BY PRISCILLA M. JENSEN**

John Irving's fans—and apparently they are legion—won't be disappointed in his newest opus, *Until I Find You*, which at 800-plus pages will add a certain gravitas to the goofiest-looking/most frivolous beach bag. The parlor game of "find the wrestler"—*pace* Irving's notorious reuse of favorite motifs from novel to novel—again proves satisfying, sort of like the insider's Nina hunt in a Hirschfeld caricature. For the unconverted, though, it also offers fertile ground to examine the received wisdom that the Serious American Reader is obliged to regard Irving as a Serious American Novelist.

Until I Find You
A Novel
by John Irving
Random House, 848 pp., $27.95

Like a number of Irving's previous novels, *Until I Find You* is a *Bildungsroman*, the tale of protagonist Jack Burns's self-discovery from the age of four almost to middle age, and we're hardly spared a day of it. The narrative offers Irving's trademark baroque smorgasbord of detail and episode, beginning with fatherless Jack's childhood search, with his tattoo-artist mother Alice, through the skinpots of northern Europe for his father William, a church organist and "ink addict"—unable to control his mania for having sheet music tattooed all over. They'd met when Alice was in a church choir and before you could say "Buxtehude" she was pregnant and William off to Canada, always one jump ahead of her.

Now he's reported to be in Scandinavia, and Alice drags Jack around the Baltic, working in tattoo parlors and inquiring after his father at churches from Copenhagen to Helsinki to Amsterdam. Everywhere he seems to have seduced and abandoned a choirgirl or two; everywhere Alice pursues him by tracking down his circle of acquaintances, offering the occasional free tattoo for information on his whereabouts. There are many adventures—in Copenhagen, Jack falls through canal ice near an old fort and is rescued by a tiny man he thinks of as "the littlest soldier," who later receives a tattoo as a reward. In Amsterdam, Alice poses briefly as a prostitute in the famous red-light district because she's heard that William is to be found there; when he doesn't appear she finally concedes defeat and returns to Canada.

Not only, dear reader, is this not the half of what happens on the European quest—or what we're told happens—it isn't a fifth part of what happens to Jack in *Until I Find You*.

We're told about his life as one of the first day boys at the formerly all-girls St. Hilda's School, where he meets the older and faintly mustachioed Emma Oastler, who'll be his tormentor, protector, muse, friend for life. We accompany him to prep schools in New England where he excels in wrestling and in the acting he'd begun at St. Hilda's. (His specialty is in playing girls—Tess of the d'Urbervilles, Dorothea Brooke of *Middlemarch*.) Jack discovers the cinema on visits with Emma. He goes off to college in New Hampshire and meets his first real girlfriend, Claudia. Jack and Claudia both play Kit Kat Girls in summer stock of *Cabaret* . . . and on and on. And we've reached page 325 or thereabouts.

Priscilla M. Jensen is a writer in northern Virginia.

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In justice, it must be said that the plot description above is incomplete to the point of reductionism. But it comes to pass precisely because of Irving's evident inability to resist telling us everything he knows about Jack Burns, and then some. We see every episode of Jack's life, strung out serially like beads on a cord, with the same amount of space allocated for BBs as for pearls.

The problems this causes are much exacerbated by the intrusion throughout *Until I Find You* of a peculiar narrative voice, much given to creaky exposition, portentous foreshadowing, and snappy asides, and perpetrator of some of the lumpiest prose it's been my lot to encounter. "Although [Jack] didn't know it, a pattern had begun." "As he would discover again, later in his life, Jack found that it can be a dark and lonely place backstage." And on the next page, "As Jack would discover, it's remarkable how you can miss people you barely knew."

There's a lot of *emphasis* in *italics*—"if these weren't *truly* her last words to him," "a first reader *meant* an only reader," "[she] wasn't *that* well-spoken; her English was only *okay*." As the reviewer would learn in early life, it's enough to give you a *migraine*. (Note: The reviewer has also learned that Irving changed the novel's voice from first to third person fairly late in the game, which may have a great deal to do with its stylistic shortcomings.)

Perhaps it's not surprising that the effect of this avalanche of information, and the narrator's frequent two cents' worth, is that Jack Burns's story comes across as recited rather than shown. We're told, for example, that in his college years, "Jack liked Truffaut but he *loved* Bergman." Then that he "liked Goethe but he loved Rilke," and not least that he "liked Claudia but he *loved* her car." Within 11 pages, we've at least been filled in that he feels more strongly about cinema and transportation than about poetry, but it comes across with all the conviction of an ISO ad, and with greater redundancy. (ISO ads charge by the word.)

These failures of style and the sheer longueurs of *Until I Find You* are unfortunate, for they interfere with exploring the novel's more serious intentions. It takes stamina to stick with Jack (through his Hollywood career in transvestite roles, his transition to screenwriting after Emma's death, his Academy Award) long enough to see him through to the conclusion.

John Irving

Getty Images / Jordan Silverman

In the epigraph, Irving announces his concern with memory as a "form of storytelling"—drawn on, perhaps, as a way of making life "acceptable," even though "in talking about the past we lie with every breath we draw." So he signals the reader to be wary of what he's told. We learn that Jack discovers that almost anything his mother has said about his father is a lie, that he didn't simply abandon his son, and that Alice has taken her revenge in a series of cruelties her son could not have imagined. But we're also alerted to the pitfalls created by other betrayals—of false rosy memory, incomplete memory, memory made and changed by acting or storytelling.

If, "in talking about the past, we lie with every breath," how can a novelist get at larger truths? Irving invites the reader to consider what truth might emerge from Jack's synthesis of his own experience, or from the reader's weighing everything he encounters in Jack's story. But if Jack Burns is literally an actor, as his mother claimed early in his life, and as his career demonstrates, he is much more profoundly an act*ee*—someone to whom things happen. In his childhood he is a victim of sexual abuse. The older girls at St. Hilda's play a literally manipulative game of doctor, and his molestation at the hands (and other parts) of the frightening housekeeper Mrs. Machado is the final blow to his naiveté, if not entirely to his innocence. Both these experiences reinforce his immaturity and his passivity.

Irving has anticipated a critical outcry from the "good taste police" about the considerable sexual content of *Until I Find You*. Sexually explicit tattoos, for example, are a recurrent symbolic motif. The longest-lived "marriage" is a lesbian one. Jack's alienation and passivity are indicated in his attraction to older women and a preference for incomplete sexual activity. In fact, its sexual imagery is the novel's most effective illumination of the action.

My considerable unease with it stems from knowing that sexually predatory behavior by women and girls toward boys and young men is one of Irving's leitmotifs—a morbid and depressing one. It isn't picaresque or comic—it's rarely pleasurable, even. It seems to have nothing to do with

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love or even affection. Irving has objected when people take note of the frequent bizarreries in his work, saying that real lives are full of bizarre incidents. If this "pedo-sexual" motif is reiterated for serious reasons, its morbidness is deeply distressing; if it's to fling in a sure-fire frisson, it's a cheap trick.

But Jack's on-again, off-again search for his father, and what he is able to understand when he finds him, even more conclusively demonstrate the incompleteness of *Until I Find You* as *Bildungsroman*. Irving certainly knows the elements of the form—the fatherless hero, the elements of autobiography, a movement from the home of childhood toward the larger world. Indeed, as we've seen, they're his stock in trade. But the classic conclusion is the protagonist's achievement of a mature self-awareness that leads to his forming bonds to the larger community.

For all the struggles asserted on his behalf, Jack Burns's journey toward manhood remains incomplete. He does, indeed, find his marvelously decorated father, ecstatically mad but the embodiment of a joyful lovingness that has been absent from Jack's experience. Though Jack gladly accepts responsibility for his father, and begins a relationship with his newly discovered sister, these steps toward attachment are tentative and anticlimactic because they remain so self-referential. Attachment to family, however necessary, is not the same as a mature relationship to the larger world, and it remains unclear whether Jack will be able to expand his horizons.

There's a clue to the nature of this incompleteness in Irving's "motif game," which is doubly self-referential in its use of autobiography and of borrowings from his previous work. These mirror tricks may glitter, but they make it far more difficult to convey depth and dimension, and Irving's preoccupation with himself and his whimsies becomes a self-indulgence which borders on facetiousness. Thus, the remaining hurdles for earnest Jack Burns; thus, the failure of seriousness that undermines John Irving. ♦

Woman of Substance

Mrs. Herbert Hoover was no ordinary first lady.

BY KRISTIE MILLER

Books on the hyperkinetic Eleanor Roosevelt abound, outnumbering those about all but the most illustrious presidents, while her predecessor, Lou Henry Hoover, has so suffered by comparison that to most she is merely a name on a list of 20th-century presidential wives.

Now the activist Lou Hoover receives her due from Nancy Beck Young, who contends that Hoover blazed the trails that ER would follow and extend. Lou Hoover "revolutionized" the office of first lady, Young says, expanding the traditional role of hostess to include her own political agenda. She became the first first lady to speak on the radio, to contend with civil rights issues, and to struggle against the effects of the Great Depression.

Lou Henry Hoover
Activist First Lady
by Nancy Beck Young
University Press of Kansas, 238 pp., $29.95

Unlike Eleanor Roosevelt, Lou Henry Hoover had been unconventional all her life. Born in Waterloo, Iowa, in 1874, she always championed traditional rural values. But her father, Charles Henry, taught her to fish and to ride bareback, unladylike diversions by the standards of the day. In 1890 she wrote an essay entitled "The Independent Girl."

More remarkably, Lou Henry majored in geology at Stanford. She encountered little discrimination until her graduation in 1898, when she began to look for a job. At that point, she regretted that her degree, an A.B., "unfortunately does not stand . . . for 'A Boy'—ah, what wouldn't I give just about now to be one!" She corresponded with Herbert Hoover, a fellow geology student, by then off seeking his fortune in the mines in Australia. He proposed by telegram, she accepted, and they traveled to China where she followed him into the mines and on the barricades during the Boxer Rebellion. She had two sons, but always felt her place was with her husband.

By the start of World War I, the Hoovers had enough money to live on their investments and devote their time to public service. Leaving their boys with her parents, Lou and Bert worked together to provide relief to war-torn Europe, Bert through food programs, and Lou by heading up a committee to rescue nearly 26,000 American women and children stranded by the conflict. After the war, Hoover's work diverged from her husband's, as she worked on the national level with women's athletics and the Girl Scouts. She developed organizational and bureaucratic skills, moving beyond the "single-issue female activists of the era," says Young.

When Lou Hoover went to the White House in 1929, she continued to pursue her activist agenda. Even her entertaining had political overtones, as when she invited the wife of Illinois congressman Oscar DePriest, the first African-American U.S. representative since Reconstruction, to a tea for congressional wives. She also anticipated Jacqueline Kennedy by three decades in her restoration of the White House, and built the first presidential retreat.

The price of being a transitional figure was widespread criticism. Southern senators bellowed in protest over the invitation to Mrs. DePriest.

Kristie Miller is author, most recently, of Isabella Greenway: An Enterprising Woman.

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Hoover was criticized for driving her own car. Her social secretary tried to convince her to slow down. Even though women's roles were changing in the 1920s, the public was not ready to accept an activist first lady, whose role is always a "lagging indicator" of social mores, says Lewis L. Gould, editor of the University Press of Kansas series of Modern First Ladies, of which this book is a part.

Even female journalists, who had broken with convention themselves, criticized Lou Hoover. So when the Depression descended, and the first lady mobilized her considerable contacts to alleviate its effects among the poor, she refused to publicize her efforts, one reason her accomplishments are so little known today.

Lou Hoover's rural upbringing made her prefer local solutions and private philanthropy to nationwide governmental relief programs, as more likely to spare the dignity of recipients. When Herbert Hoover established the President's Emergency Committee on Employment (PECE), its women's division included close associates of Lou Hoover's such as Lillian Gilbreth (the author/mother in *Cheaper By the Dozen*). Ironically, Young notes, its New Deal counterpart, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, originally had no women's department.

All through her term as first lady, Lou Hoover continued her earlier work with the Girl Scouts as part of her mission to counter the ill effects of modernization. Her insistence on fairness, or civil rights, moved her to expand Scouting to American Indians.

With the onset of the Depression, she used the Girl Scouts to provide local relief. She was so proud of her Girl Scouts that she unintentionally condescended to the opposite sex during a radio address, when she said, "Not for a moment are we minimizing what the men and boys have done! That we know, and it is marvelous." Membership in the Girl Scouts rose during the Depression as girls realized their power to alleviate hardship. Young suggests that Lou Hoover's work with the Girl Scouts "probably did more for the young women who participated in it than it did to address the national economic malady." Still, in a time when women were being fired wholesale to give scarce jobs to men, it was no small thing to give young women a sense of worth.

Lou Henry Hoover, ca. 1930

CORBIS

Lou Hoover underestimated the unprecedented scope of the Depression, although she did more than any previous first lady to combat an economic and political crisis. In any case, her aversion to publicity made it difficult for her to expand her programs beyond her immediate sphere of influence. Surprisingly, while the Hoovers worked at complementary jobs during the Great War, Young says that the president "rarely leaned on Lou for policy support" during the Depression.

After her husband left office, Lou Hoover continued her work with private organizations, still believing that the downturn was the result of abandoning traditional values. Young notes that even though New Deal programs were more successful than the Hoovers' voluntary activism, they "did not bring about full recovery from the Great Depression." Both strategies, she argues, attempted to address the economic and social dislocations of modern life. Through her work with the Girl Scouts, "Hoover reminded Americans of the importance of community service in their increasingly anonymous, modern world."

Although Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt were very different, Lou Hoover and Eleanor Roosevelt had many similarities. If her husband had not been swamped by the Depression, Lou Hoover's abilities and activism might have won her a share of the admiration that has all gone to ER.

Lou Hoover was one of the first modern women to try to balance age-old values about caring for children with hopes of self-fulfillment and dreams of a career. Nancy Young notes that Hoover's career "serves as a poignant reminder" of the difficulty of living in the midst of a social shift: Her life departed dramatically from 19th-century norms, but from our perspective in the early 21st century, Young says, "Hoover's accomplishments seem somehow incomplete."

Young's work combines meticulous research with good analysis to create a vivid portrait of a sympathetic, interesting, and unfairly overlooked pioneer among the high-achieving women of our time. ♦

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The Best Crossword

It might be in a three-letter word beginning with "S."

BY MATT GAFFNEY

Which newspaper produces the best crossword puzzle in the country? Ask 10 people at your next dinner party and all of them will say, "Why, the *New York Times*, of course," while shooting you a doesn't-everybody-know-that? look.

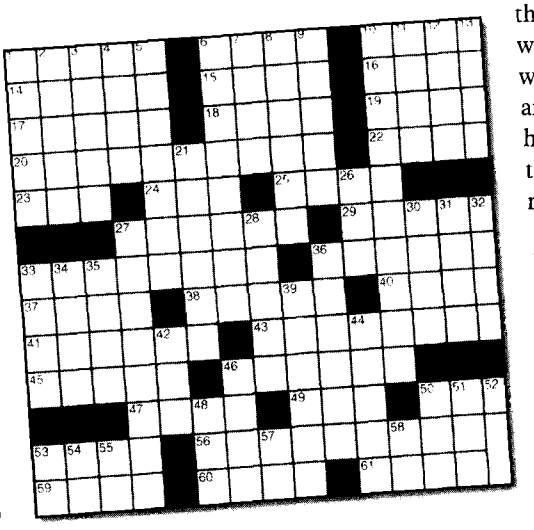
They might well be right; three years ago, they indisputably were right. But recently, a rival has emerged upon the crossword veldt to challenge the *Times*'s supremacy and its puzzle editor, Will Shortz. This novel creature is the *New York Sun* crossword, and is driven by the vigor of its puzzle editor, Peter Gordon, who used to work for Shortz at the *Times*. For the first time in recent memory, the answer to the question posed in the opening sentence of this article is seriously debatable.

As a normal American, I have an unhealthy fascination with the concept of "best," so I decided to run an experiment to see which of these two puzzles would come out on top in head-to-head competition—a crossword smackdown, if you will. But before we get to that, a little history to set the scene.

The *New York Times* crossword established its household-name brand dominance under the skillful eye of Margaret Farrar, who edited the crossword from its debut in 1942 to her retirement in 1969. She was followed by Will Weng, who edited to mostly favorable reviews until 1977.

Matt Gaffney is a professional crossword writer living in Washington, D.C. His book, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Solving Crossword Puzzles and Other Word Games, *will be published in October.*

At that time, the puzzle was regarded as the best daily crossword in the land, and it was. But under the editorship of Weng's successor, Eugene T. Maleska, the puzzle's reputation began to slide, at least in crossword circles. Maleska was known for filling his puzzles with "crosswordese," those painfully obscure words you never see anywhere in life outside



of the crossword page. This made many of his puzzles less a fun, fair challenge than an unsolvable, headache-inducing battle with a set of encyclopedias. The average well-educated person simply couldn't be expected to know that LOA, in an infamous clue example of the era, was a "Town in Utah"—a town with around 250 people, as it turned out.

The so-called "New Wave" style of crossword puzzles, which shunned obscurities in favor of familiar words, humor, and pop culture, held little appeal for Maleska, and when he passed away in 1993, the *Times* puzzle was in need of a savior to keep pace with the zeitgeist. Rival editors like Stan Newman at *Newsday* had begun successfully syndicating their own daily crosswords, pointing out in their promotional literature how obscure and practically unsolvable some *Times* puzzles had become.

Enter Will Shortz, the genial former editor of *GAMES* magazine, who famously possesses the world's only college degree in enigmatology (the study of puzzles). Within weeks of his hire in 1993, the reputation and the reality of the *Times* crossword were back in alignment: Artistic standards were raised, puzzle writers' fees were increased, and the *Times*'s puzzle audience widened.

Competing daily crosswords began to have more trouble syndicating their puzzles, and started to position themselves not so much as rivals to the *Times*, but rather as "somewhat easier than the *Times* crosswords" or otherwise different in some way. There were other good daily puzzles around, but the big kid on the block had reasserted himself; artistically, the *Times* was back on top. It had no rivals.

Until recently. When the *New York Sun* began publishing in 2002, Peter Gordon jumped ship from the *Times* to edit its crossword. His intention was to make the *Sun* puzzle the best in the country, no easy task. But Gordon, with remarkable energy, has applied innovation after innovation to the crossword editor's job, and the results have gotten puzzle people talking. For example, he virtually never allows himself to repeat a clue, even in crosswords published years apart, which leads to even frequent puzzle words like ALI and ERA being clued freshly every time.

After solving a few dozen puzzles from the *Sun* during the past year, I was impressed, and discovered that others were, too. On the *New York Times* crosswords forum, moderator Will Johnston ranked the *Sun* puzzles as being "tougher" than the *Times* puzzles (not necessarily an indication of quality, but still interesting). Rating the *Sun* as tougher than the *Times* "may be controversial," Johnston wrote, "but I think Peter Gordon's

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clues are in general harder on the tricky days."

Another forum member conducted an informal survey on which of the two puzzles readers preferred, and solvers came down about 60-40 in favor of the *Times*. Not bad for the challenger, especially since Gordon disputed certain aspects of how the survey was conducted.

In other words, it's time for a crossword smackdown, so let's do it! I want to know what the best daily crossword puzzle in the country is, and so do you. By general consensus, this title bout is between the venerable *New York Times*, under its brutally witty editor Will Shortz, and the upstart *New York Sun*, under its scrappy, full-of-new-ideas editor Peter Gordon.

Methodology: For the low, low price of one dinner, my long-suffering girlfriend printed out 30 *Times* and 30 *Sun* puzzles from the papers' websites, cut off the bylines and titles, and blacked out the copyright beneath the puzzles. This took away all identifying features and left me solving without knowing which puzzles were which. All 60 puzzles were published in April or May of this year.

(Disclosure: I've written a few dozen crosswords for Shortz in the *Times*, and have worked with Peter Gordon on several crossword books. I respect both greatly and have no grudge, bias, or bile against either, but I solved blind anyway to remove any possible slant, conscious or not.)

I solved all 60 puzzles, then assigned each one a score for artistry and a score for technical merit, each on a scale from 1 to 10. I also gave myself the option of assigning a star, worth one bonus point, to any puzzle that had some extra flash of brilliance.

Of the 60, three puzzles (two *Sun* and one *Times*) had to be discarded from the tally for various reasons. One *Sun* and one *Times* puzzle I already happened to have solved, and another *Sun* puzzle was a crossword variant that wouldn't fit in with my analysis. Out those three went, and then, to even things up, I discarded one average-scoring *Times* puzzle from the tally, leaving 28 crosswords from each paper to be compared.

Because the *Sun* publishes only Monday through Friday, I omitted all *Times* Friday and Sunday puzzles from the competition. This left the two papers going head-to-head on Monday-through-Thursday puzzles, then the Friday *Sun* and the Saturday *Times* going at it. This seemed fairer to the *Times* than omitting its Saturday puzzle, since the Saturday *Times* is generally the toughest of the week.

Before we get to the results, let me stress, paradoxically, both the subjective and objective natures of judging any kind of art, crosswords included. Some people prefer Beethoven to Mozart; others prefer Mozart to Beethoven. There is no "better" choice between the two. If, however, someone prefers Ashlee Simpson to both, we may discount their musical opinion without guilt. What we have here, you might say, are the Mozart and Beethoven of crossword editors; if one prefers Ashlee, the *TV Guide* crossword will provide it. For better or worse, then, this is an article for crossword snobs.

Enough qualifying remarks: This is America, dammit, and people want a winner. And that winner is, by a score of 432 to 419: The *New York Sun* crossword.

The *Sun* outscored the *Times* by the smallest possible margin in artistry (210 points to 209), and by a rather larger margin in technical merit (214 points to 206). This isn't a huge spread, but broadly speaking, the technical score was higher for the *Sun* because of its somewhat better job of keeping crosswordese out of the puzzles. For instance, I was surprised to see both YSER (a small river in Belgium and France) and ESNE (a medieval serf) in one *Times* puzzle—both words are oft-mocked instances of crosswordese. This example was atypical of the *Times* puzzles, but the *Sun*'s grids were a bit cleaner overall.

The *Sun* puzzles also had slightly punchier clues, probably thanks to Gordon's no-repeat rule. Shortz's dry wit comes through consistently in the *Times*, however, on clues like "Leaves for a drink" for the answer TEA.

Twelve of the 56 puzzles earned a star (and a bonus point) for being especially brilliant in theme, construction, cluing, or all three. Of these 12, 8 were from the *Sun* and 4 from the *Times*. The *Times* did score the top overall single puzzle, however, the only one of the 56 to receive a 10 rating in either category—and it got a 10 in *both* artistry and technical merit (and, unsurprisingly, a bonus point).

It's a stunning 56-word themeless puzzle from the Saturday, May 7 *Times*, written by the much-admired North Carolina wordsmith Patrick Berry. It stands out for its total lack of crosswordese and abundance of lively words and phrases in the grid—both extraordinarily difficult to pull off in a grid as wide open as this one. It's one of the most impressive crossword puzzles I've ever seen.

Despite the *Sun*'s slim win, there's no real threat to the *Times*'s cultural and syndication superiority. The *Times* (circulation 1.1 million) syndicates its puzzle to hundreds of newspapers around the country, meaning its crossword is probably solved by a few million people on a given day. The *Sun* (circulation 50,000) does not syndicate its puzzle to any papers, meaning its crossword is probably solved by only a few thousand people on a given day. Thanks to the Internet, however, you can solve it online at *www.nysun.com*. (*Sun* puzzles are free of charge. *Times* puzzles, available at *www.nytimes.com* if you can't find them in your local paper, cost $34.95 per year.) Because it only appears Monday through Friday, the *Sun* puzzle cannot be easily syndicated to papers that publish six or seven times per week.

Capitalism's finest spiritual feature is that it elicits ever-improving work from us. If and when it feels the need, I have no doubt that the *Times* will throw its institutional weight behind punching its puzzles up to even higher heights. Then, if we are lucky, the *Sun* will feel the need to reply in kind.

I look forward to the ride, and suggest readers enjoy both crosswords, with Wolfgang or Ludwig playing in the background, as you prefer. But please, not Ashlee. Not with these puzzles. ♦

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The Ladies Windermere

Two productions, and two separate visions, of early Oscar Wilde. BY JOHN SIMON

It is instructive to compare concurrent productions of Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan*. This was the first of Wilde's four social comedies that climaxed in his masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The two productions are at Washington's Shakespeare Theatre and at the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

The play can be better grasped via a revelatory new biography, Neil McKenna's *The Secret Life of Oscar Wilde*, which concentrates on Wilde's hyperactive homosexual activities that previous biographers tended to underplay. Oscar's marriage to the puritanical Constance had started with his infatuation, but soon turned into his physical revulsion, what with his ever-increasing involvement with so-called renters—young male prostitutes—and other youths. Dangerous business, this, in Victorian England, where homosexuality was outlawed and elicited draconian sentences, and renters and their pimps could easily blackmail their clients, knowing that denunciation could land the accuser in jail.

But, as the biography makes clear, part of the excitement for Oscar was what he called "feasting with panthers," the danger, and the mostly unconscious but growing urge to get caught and become a martyr for the homosexual cause. Indeed, Melissa Knox's provocative *Oscar Wilde: A Long and Lovely Suicide* approaches Wilde from that angle: He could have easily avoided prison by escaping, like so many other homosexuals, to the Continent. In the play, much of which is covert autobiography, boredom with the very proper Constance translated into Lady Windermere's intransigent puritanism, and Oscar's curiously friendly relations with his blackmailers were represented heterosexually as dealings with manipulative women such as Mrs. Erlynne in *Fan* and Mrs. Cheveley in *A Woman of No Importance*—all part of an Ovidian *deteriora sequor*, flirting with the abyss.

Matthew Greer, Tessa Auberjonois

Shakespeare Theatre / Carol Rosegg

What Oscar entitled *A Good Woman* until his formidable literary mother demanded something more alluring opened in early 1892 London as *Lady Windermere's Fan*. Already notorious for other writings, Wilde was making his dazzling debut as a dramatist. Never much interested in plot, he considered it a mere sop to the audience. "Art should never be popular," he wrote. "The public should try to make itself artistic." As critics at the time noted, several plot elements were nonchalantly lifted from sundry, mostly French, plays. But the public loved the wit, unaware that, as Peter Raby recently remarked, "this imitation of Englishness is at once parodic and unnervingly accurate, a subtle form of insult."

Lord Arthur and Lady Margaret Windermere have been happily married two years and have a six-month-old son. Lord Darlington, though a rake, is genuinely in love with Margaret; hinting at some dark reason, he urges her to elope with him. As she refuses, he declares he'll leave England for a long time. Enter the Duchess of Berwick and her insipid daughter, Lady Agatha, who never says more than "Yes, mamma." The Duchess, an earlier version of the daunting Lady Bracknell of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, imparts that Windermere has been seen much with a Mrs. Erlynne, divorcee and demimondaine, apparently giving her large sums of money.

Left alone, Lady Windermere breaks open her husband's secret, locked bankbook, with stubs of hefty checks made out to Mrs. Erlynne. Arthur arrives and asks Margaret to invite Mrs. Erlynne to her twenty-first-birthday ball that evening. Furious, she refuses, and threatens to strike the woman with the diamond-studded fan, her husband's birthday gift, if she should show up. Arthur himself sends the invitation, muttering that he dare not reveal Mrs. E.'s true identity to his wife: "The shame would kill her."

The Windermere marriage is an idealization of the Wilde one. Trouble comes with Arthur's frequentation of Mrs. E., who stands for Oscar's louche involvements with men. Like Constance Wilde, Margaret is a moralistic puritan—women like Mrs. E. "should never be forgiven"—hence her violence against her, and total intolerance for her husband. His anxiety is about the threatened revelation that Mrs. E. is her mother, who did not, as purported, die young, but ran off with a lover. The shame would kill Margaret. Shame, a concept that recurs throughout the play, was also, as McKenna shows, a contemporary code word for clandestine homosexual activity.

John Simon writes about theater for Bloomberg News.

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Lord Darlington, too, is an Oscar stand-in. When Margaret rebukes him for calling her "a fascinating Puritan," saying "the adjective was unnecessary," he replies, "I couldn't help it. I can resist everything except temptation." A typical Wildean epigram, it is a variation on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*'s "The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it." The temptations in Wilde's life, to be sure, were not just for unwelcome compliments.

When the Duchess calls Darlington wicked, he responds, "As a wicked man I am a complete failure. Why, there are lots of people who say I have never really done anything wrong. . . . Of course they only say it behind my back." What could be more whitewashing than turning one's sins into castigated virtues? "Life," he comments, "is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously about it." When the Duchess doesn't understand this, he explains, "Nowadays, to be intelligible is to be found out." The veiled meaning is that underlying amorality must not surface.

Badinage on one level, this is self-revelation and self-exculpation on a deeper one. Jests can be decoded. The Duchess complains, "Boys are so wicked. My boy is excessively immoral. You wouldn't believe at what hours he comes home. And he has only left Oxford a few months—I really don't know what they teach them there." Wilde, after orgying, would come home at all hours, if at all. He, too, went to Oxford, where his penchants emerged. Lord Alfred Douglas, his great love, was still at Oxford in 1892, and already involved in homosexual scandals.

Acted, the play requires tremendous charm, sophistication, and elegance, helped by the melody of British English. Washington's Darlington, Matthew Greer, manages passionate poignancy along with clever repartee. He is of the period, and his utterance has implications as well as meanings. In Williamstown, Adam Rothenberg plays a contemporary swinger, not very English, and with seemingly nothing to hide: There is no double bottom to his performance.

Williamstown's Duchess, Isabel Keating, is too young, too lightweight, and loses some terrific lines by lacking the right rhythms, emphases, and pauses—the twang of humor and the sting of wit. Washington's time-tested comedienne Nancy Robinette knows exactly how to extract every ounce of humor. So when she advises Margaret, "The wicked women get our husbands away from us, but they always come back to us, slightly damaged, of course," she knows how long to pause after "back to us," and change tempo, volume, and tone for "slightly damaged, of course." Next, in "And don't make scenes. Men hate them!" she finds the laugh in how much condescension can be squeezed out of the monosyllable "men."

And so on, through four acts. Mrs. Erlynne in both productions is a star of TV's *Designing Women*, but whereas Washington's Dixie Carter, except in her strongly enacted scenes of passion, keeps a twinkly-eyed sense of humor, Williamstown's handsome Jean Smart is a bit of a stick, uncompelling at both wit and emotion. Of course, much depends on the directors. The Shakespeare Theatre production was directed by the gifted Britisher Keith Baxter, actor, director, and playwright—a man who knows how to stage such an English classic with due period flavor. Williamstown's Moisés Kaufman was presumably picked for having directed Off Broadway the successful *Gross Indecency*, a docudrama he devised from the transcripts of Wilde's three trials. I found it pedestrian, crass in its interpolations, and wretchedly cast.

Kaufman's other main achievements were *The Laramie Project*, a docudrama about the hate murder of a young homosexual, and *I Am My Own Wife*, a one-man play based on the memoirs of a German transsexual. Well done, but nothing like Wilde's comedies. Especially unconvincing is the static staging of the birthday ball, with no lively continuity. And what poor casting! As the seasoned *flâneur* Cecil Graham, the inexperienced Benjamin Walker falls well short of Washington's Gregory Wooddell, even if, unlike him, Walker does wear in his lapel a green carnation (the homosexual's self-advertisement), as in 1892 did Cecil onstage, and Wilde and his young entourage in the audience. But Mr. Dumby, another social butterfly (played in Williamstown by the too-young but very funny Chandler Williams) should not, as a womanizer, be wearing it as well.

Washington's Lady Windermere, Tessa Auberjonois, is a bit too tomboyish; Williamstown's Samantha Soule is more aptly prim, but at the cost of colorlessness. Washington's Lord Windermere, Andrew Long, really suffers; Williamstown's Corey Brill is dopily wooden. Lord Augustus Lorton, the comic peer whom Mrs. E. manages to ensnare matrimonially, gets equal expertise from Washington's David Sabin and Williamstown's Jack Willis. But silly Lady Agatha is handled more effectively in Williamstown by Elliotte Crowell than by Washington's Tonya Beckman Ross. In neither production, though, is her suitor's Australian accent even remotely approximated. And where Baxter, in Washington, directs a British butler to behave with condign dignity, Kaufman inexcusably has him played as a campy smartass.

In Washington, Simon Higlett's scenery—whimsically including *chez* Windermere a bust of Wilde—is far superior to Williamstown's simplified, more modern decor by Neil Patel, though budget disparity doubtless played a role. Most important is the difference in the handling of accents, slightly steadier in Washington, and the delivery of epigrams, which is crisp and spontaneous there, producing steady laughter, as opposed to Williamstown's rather sporadic guffaws. But even in Washington, though less so than in Williamstown, period sense is incomplete. Is this a result of inadequate teaching, or of indifference by younger actors? Or could it all be explained by a line from *A Woman of No Importance*? "The youth of America is their oldest tradition. It has been going on now for three hundred years. To hear them talk one would imagine they are in their first childhood. As far as civilization goes they are in their second." ♦

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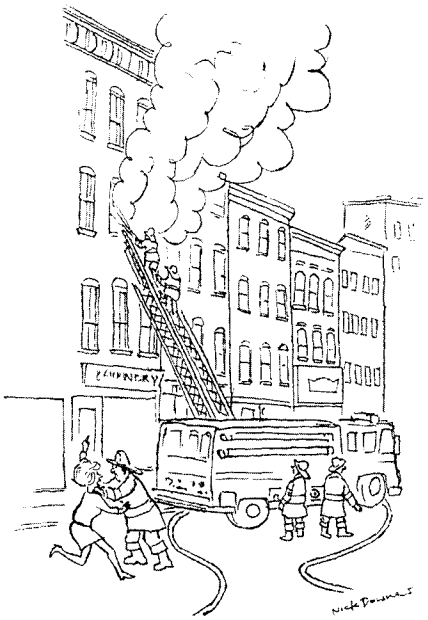

"Oh please—my husband's unfinished novel is in there; can't you let it burn awhile longer?"

Books in Brief

***The Word that Causes Death's Defeat: Poems of Memory* by Anna Akhmatova, Translated by Nancy K. Anderson (Yale, 352 pp., $30)** The Russian poet Anna Akhmatova stands at the pinnacle of the mountain range of Joseph Stalin's millions of victims. All were swept into the horror of the Stalinist murder machine, some executed after frame-up trials, others sent away as officials to distant places, many more to prisons, concentration camps, hard labor in Siberian and Arctic mines, or to their deaths on suicide missions.

Akhmatova, among the most gifted of all Russian poets, saw her lovers Nikolai Gumilyov and Osip Mandelstam—also distinguished poets—perish at the hands of the secret police. The first was shot for counterrevolutionary plotting, the second, considered by many the greatest Russian poet after Pushkin, died of a heart attack in a punitive work camp. Akhmatova's son Lev Gumilyov was sent into the darkness where he was driven mad (he became one of Russia's most prolific and bizarre Jew-baiters).

Akhmatova had been known to the Russian public as a poet of love, spirituality, and patriotism. She was also remembered as a target of extraordinary public abuse by the highest stratum of Stalinist bosses, who denounced her as "both nun and harlot, mixing fornication and prayer," in the tasteful words of Stalin's culture boss, Andrei Zhdanov. Such insults were cast at her after she produced notable works of lyrical devotion to Russia, while it fought off the Nazi invaders in World War II.

In the aftermath of Stalin's death Akhmatova became more famous for her composition of two great, even immortal, poems on Russian history: *Requiem*, begun in 1935 and completed with an introductory note in 1961, and *Poem Without a Hero* (1940-1962). Numerous Russian patriots and others concerned for the collective memory of Stalin's victims know her *Requiem*, which deals with her son's arrest and imprisonment, by heart. The poem includes unsurpassably chilling lines: *The stars of death rose and stood above / And Russia, guiltless, tormented, writhed, / Trampled under boots stained with blood / And crushed by the Black Marias' tires.*

Yale University Press has gained due honor for its distinguished Annals of Communism series, to which this volume is a worthy addition. Translator and editor Anderson's presentation of Akhmatova's historical poems, backed up by extensive biography and other academic apparatus, is useful. The volume is marred only by the absence of Russian originals alongside the translated verse (bilingual is always better), and by the artificiality of some of the renditions into English, in which clarity and exactitude have been sacrificed for the sake of rhyme.

A pair of sentences in this book is heavily poignant: "There are people still alive who knew Akhmatova. Yet with the fall of the Soviet Union, the world in which she lived already seems far from us." The investigative files on purge victims were stamped by Moscow's secret police officers, "To Be Preserved Forever." The poetry of Akhmatova about that grim time should still be read far and wide, and read again, in every language.

—*Stephen Schwartz*

GREAT MOMENTS IN ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"To my brother, Gerry Anderson, for being there for me through thick and thin, and for helping me with this manuscript. . . .

"To my children, Brando and Dilly, whom I love desperately, for giving me the idea and inspiration for staying home and writing so I could spend more time with them . . . the universe *does* validate good decisions.

"To Eric Shaw Quinn—of course . . . my partner in crime on this project—are you me or am I you? The lines have blurred and you are wearing my shoes . . . and they're trashed—you've walked more than a mile!

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"To Hefner, for helping to build interesting adventures in our lives, empowering women . . . and for just being you!

"To David LaChapelle, Luca, and Jesus . . . talented, genius, eccentric, and honest! My favorite people—friends whom I lean on and who put me out if I catch on fire. You remind me of what's important besides family: *art*."

—From Pamela Anderson's *Star Struck*

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John Roberts Listed in Federalist Society '97-98 Directory: Court Nominee Said He Has No Memory of Membership.
—Washington Post headline, July 25, 2005

Parody

Washington Post

Wednesday, August 3, 2005

Roberts Once Listed as Member Of Columbia House Record Club

Bush Court Nominee Reveals Poor Judgment, Bad Taste

By Charles Lane
Washington Post Staff Writer

During the years 1980-84, Supreme Court nominee John G. Roberts Jr. was a member in good standing of the Columbia House Record Club, according to documents obtained by the Post yesterday. Roberts, already under scrutiny for being listed in the conservative Federalist Society Leadership Directory, has offered little comment, except to say, "I was young, and my taste in music reflected the times."

Critics, however, deride Roberts's preferences as mostly vanilla. Receipts now in possession of the Post suggest Roberts enjoyed listening to such artists as Gary Numan, Air Supply, and Rupert Holmes, once well-known for his hit song "Escape (The Piña Colada Song)." The liberal activist group People for the American Way has cited Roberts's affinity for Christopher Cross albums and the collected works of Gino Vannelli as evidence of a "dangerously retrograde mindset." Some on the right have also expressed dismay at the judge's purchasing of a Juice Newton album. "It reveals a lack of good judgment," said Ann Coulter. "Other than 'Queen of Hearts,' she is absolutely worthless."

Supreme Court nominee John G. Roberts's photo in a 1979 Harvard law school annual

White House spokesman Dana Perino called Roberts's Columbia House membership a "youthful indiscretion," but added, "After the first order, you pretty much have everything you want from their list. But then there is the ongoing obligation of membership, and that is where you get into potential embarrassments," an obvious allusion to Roberts's Vangelis and Kajagoogoo albums. The judge's defenders contend there is no actual proof Roberts listened to anything he ordered. "We have no way of really knowing if Judge Roberts listened to an entire Quarterflash album," said C. Boyden Gray of the Committee for Justice. "Sometimes those things just show up in the mail and it's too much of a pain to return them."

Record-club historians note that if a member failed to select his album on time, Columbia House would send preselected "feature" albums. A source close to Roberts suggested, "He may have received Bonnie Tyler's 'Total Eclipse of the Heart'" through such inattention. Legal expert Jonathan Turley said, if true, this is "an ominous sign." Democratic senators on the Judiciary Committee are eager to pin down details of Roberts's membership. "What does it say if your preferences include 'Pac-Man Fever'?" complained Democratic Sen. Charles

See Queen, *A4, Col.1*

New Zoo Head Fluent in Parselmouth

By D'Vera Cohn
Washington Post Staff Writer

Berry, the newly named the National Zoo, speaks Parselmouth, dis- the last herpe- known as the ability to communicate with snakes. "It was a required course at my alma mater," said Berry, a graduate of Slytherin College. Berry was given a hero's welcome at the zoo's Reptile House. "At lasssst, a true leader!" said the resident python. He li

President Signs Energy Bill

Boosts Funding For 'Flux Capacitor'

Harris Cutnor
Post Staff Writer

the weekly Standard
August 8, 2005

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Every four years, America goes to the polls to elect a president, which invariably leads to complaints about how we choose our nation's leader—a process that begins with the inordinate political and media attention given to the New Hampshire primary and Iowa caucuses.

Last year was no different. Not long after the final votes were tallied, Democratic activists in both Michigan and a bloc of states west of the Mississippi River lobbied to move their states to the front of the primary process, to undermine the influence of Iowa and New Hampshire. **Such reform is long overdue and worthy of serious consideration by both major parties.**

Although there are positive aspects to voting early in Iowa and New Hampshire—the high turnout, the smaller electorates that afford a more personal style of "retail" politics—the two states are not the best barometers of national sentiment. They both lack diversity (both are predominantly white). Candidates far too often resort to pandering—farm, ethanol, and heating-oil subsidies—that is beneath the dignity of the office. As for the media, returning to the same two states every four years makes for lazy journalism.

Moreover, the two states are lousy at predicting the November winner; George W. Bush, in 2000, was the only nonincumbent to win the presidency and the Iowa caucuses, whereas his father, in 1988, was the only nonincumbent to win the New Hampshire primary and go on to the Oval Office.

How, then, do we fix the presidential nomination process? Try leading off with at least two states that represent the middle of the political spectrum as defined by the previous national election. To do this, divide the fifty states according to popular vote and find the handful of states in which the winning candidate barely lost or won. If applied to last November's results, these states would be Ohio (the median), Colorado, Iowa, Nevada, and New Mexico. Iowa, however, should be eliminated because of its lack of diversity and being too rural.

This would leave the parties with more intriguing campaign terrains. Nevada, for example, is a traditionally conservative state whose politics are changing owing to Las Vegas's population influx. Colorado offers a similar political mosaic. Its capital city, Denver, has a majority minority population. Although a reliably Republican "red" state in presidential years, it elected a Democrat to the U.S. Senate last fall. The state is also home to both conservative and liberal activism, ranging from abortion and affirmative action to Ward Churchill, the controversial University of Colorado professor.

The main advantage of this new primary system is novelty. No one state would dominate the proceedings, as do New Hampshire and Iowa now. Every four years, the parties would be looking at a mostly new set of states (twenty years ago, by contrast, the electoral "median" states were Delaware, Michigan, Missouri, and Vermont). This offers the potential for new campaign tactics and fresher media coverage.

In presidential politics, as in life, a change of scenery can be a good thing.

—Bill Whalen

Bill Whalen is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

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